NATION

Only 1,404 special need kids adopted in 5 yrs

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78% choose e-banking over cash transactions

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B'desh registers historic 10-wicket win against Pak

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Emergency in Israel as Hezbollah fires 320 rockets

This is after Israel launched airstrikes in Lebanon

JERUSALEM, 25 AUG

Israel launched a wave of airstrikes across southern Lebanon early Sunday in what it said was a pre-emptive strike on Hezbollah, as the militant group said it had launched hundreds of rockets and drones to avenge the killing of one of its top commanders last month.

The heavy exchange of fire threatened to trigger an all-out war that could draw in the United States, Iran and militant groups across the region. It could also torpedo efforts to forge a cease-fire in Gaza, where Israel has been at war with the Palestinian group Hamas, an ally of Hezbollah, for over 10 months.

By mid-morning, it appeared that the exchange had ended, with both sides having confined their attacks to military targets. But the situation remained tense, and the full extent of casualties and damage was not immediately known.

The Israeli military said Hezbollah was planning to launch a heavy barrage of rockets and missiles toward Israel. Soon after, Hezbollah announced it had launched an attack on Israeli military positions as an initial response to the killing of Fouad Shukur, one of its founders, in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut last month. The attacks came as Egypt hosts a new round of talks aimed at ending the Israel-Hamas war. Hezbollah has said it will halt the fighting if there is a cease-fire in Gaza. Iran supports both groups as well as militants in Syria, Iraq and Yemen who might join any larger conflict. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, speaking at the start of a Cabinet meeting, said the military had eliminated "thousands of rockets that were aimed at northern Israel" and urged citizens to adhere to directives from the Home Front Command.

"We are determined to do everything to defend our country, to return the residents of the north securely to their homes and to continue upholding a simple rule: Whoever harms us — we will harm them," he said.

Hezbollah said its attack involved more than 320 Katyusha rockets aimed at multiple sites in Israel and a "large number" of drones. It said the operation was targeting "a qualitative Israeli military target that will be announced later" as well as "enemy sites and barracks and Iron Dome (missile defence) platforms. —*PTI*

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An Israeli fighter jet intercepts a Hezbollah drone ***PHOTO: EPA***

PHOTO: AP/PTI

India mulls cheetahs from Sudan, Tanzania

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

India considered sourcing new cheetahs from Somalia, Tanzania, Sudan and other range countries closer to the equator or in the Northern Hemisphere to avoid biorhythm complications observed in big cats brought from Southern Hemisphere countries like South Africa and Namibia, according to official records. Due to the differences in circadian rhythms between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, some cheetahs developed thick winter coats during the Indian summer and monsoon last year, anticipating the African winter (June to September). PTI has learnt from sources that the cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa have once again developed thick winter coats. Despite these concerns, discussions are ongoing with Southern Hemisphere countries to bring new cheetahs. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Woman tonsured, ostracised in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, 25 AUG

A woman was allegedly ostracised and tonsured following the order of a kangaroo court for hitting her during a quarrel in Odisha's Jharsuguda district, police said on Sunday. The incident took place at Routbahal village under Laikera police station and four people including the husband of the woman were arrested. According to police, the woman had a quarrel with her husband over some issue on 9 August, during which she hit him. Later, her husband informed the villagers about the incident and a kangaroo court was convened for a 'trial.' The kangaroo court has allegedly ordered that the woman would be ostracised and tonsured. It also allegedly imposed a penalty of Rs 5,000 on the woman and directed her to give a mutton feast to people. After she was tonsured and ostracised, the woman and her son approached the police and lodged a complaint. —*PTI*

WB schools get notices over protesting students

KOLKATA, 25 AUG

- Slogans such as "Hatras theke RG Kar, dharsaner biruddhe othao swar (From Hathras to RG Kar, raise voice against rapes)" rented the air

West Bengal government has issued showcause notices to several government-aided schools following allegations that students and teachers have been participating in ongoing protests during school hours. The protests are in response to the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. Schools in Howrah, Bankura, East Midnapore, and West Midnapore were issued showcause notices, said officials.

Meanwhie, rallies and demonstrations were held in different parts of the state protesting the rape and murder incident. Civil society members in Kolkata marched from Ramlila Maidan in Moulali to Metro Channel in Esplanade, demanding justice for the victim of the crime that shook the conscience of the nation.

Slogans such as "Hatras theke RG Kar, dharsaner biruddhe othao swar (From Hathras to RG Kar, raise voice against rapes)" rented the air.

"While we demand the chief minister's statement on the issue of women's safety in the state, we also seek punishment of all the rapists -- whether the crime took place in Hatras or Kolkata. There has to be zero tolerance to such horrific attacks on women," said rights activist Satabdi Das, one of the organisers of the march. Celebrated dancer Mamata Shankar led a rally of her students in the southern part of the city, demanding justice over the incident.

"All we are asking now is to track all those involved in this ghastly crime and ensure prompt justice so that the perpetrators get exemplary punishment. Hang them to death," she said. —*PTI*

People protest over the alleged sexual assault and murder of a resident doctor, in Sodepur, Kolkata ***PHOTO: KIREETY NGO***

PALIKA BAZAAR OPENS

South India's first underground BBMP shopping complex Palika Bazaar was inaugurated by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah (not in pics) at Vijayanagar, Bengaluru, on Sunday; People are seen shopping ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

1.10L CASES FILED

Govt recovers 20 lakh acres in Western Ghats

Over 20 days, operations targeted 10 districts ***PHOTO: PTI***

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

In an extensive crackdown on illegal resorts and homestays in the Western Ghats, the Forest Department has recovered nearly 20 lakh acres of encroached land and filed 1.10 lakh cases across the State. This follows the formation of the 'Western Ghats Forest Encroachment Task Force' by the State government, to curb illegal encroachments in the ecologically sensitive region spanning ten districts.

Over 20 days, operations targeted areas in Mysuru, Udupi, Kodagu, Chamarajanagar, Hassan, Belagavi, Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, Shivamogga, and Chikkamagaluru.

This crackdown was motivated in light of the recent landslides in Shirur and Kerala's Wayanad, resulting in significant loss of life and property. On 16 July, a massive landslide in Shirur claimed at least eight lives, with three others still missing. Meanwhile, in Wayanad, landslide claimed 357 lives. The Forest Department has highlighted these disasters as dire warnings about the dangers of environmental neglect, emphasising the urgent need to protect the Western Ghats.

The Forest Department's crackdown is part of a broader initiative to safeguard this vital ecosystem by reclaiming and restoring encroached lands to their natural state.

On 5 August, State Additional Chief Secretary of the Forest Department issued orders to remove all forest encroachments that have emerged since 2015 in the Western Ghats region. Clear instructions were given to initiate clearance operations for cases where the 64A process of the Karnataka Forest Act has been completed. This legal process involves penalties for unauthorized possession of land designated as reserved forest, district forest, village forest, protected forest, or any other land under the control of the Forest Department.

Officials from the Forest Department noted that monthly action reports will be submitted to monitor the progress of these clearance operations.

The department's efforts are a critical step in restoring the ecological balance in the Western Ghats, ensuring that future generations can continue to benefit from the region's natural wealth. Officials from the Forest Department noted that monthly action reports will be submitted to monitor the progress of these clearance operations.

On 12 August farmers in Tirthahalli submitted a memorandum to the governor through the tahsildar, criticizing the government's actions regarding cracking down on the illegal encroached land and the government's move turning shivamogga forest land into a "no-man's land" as the local people had long conserved and cultivated the land, which had been traditionally protected. —*Salar News*

Hema report: Director Ranjith, actor Siddique quit posts

T'PURAM/KOCHI, 25 AUG

Rocked by the Justice K Hema Committee's explosive findings of harassment and abuse of women professionals, the Malayalam cinema industry on Sunday witnessed two high-profile resignations related to such issues, including that of director Ranjith who stepped down as the chairman of a state-run film academy.

Even as political pressure was building against Ranjith, actor Siddique quit as the general secretary of Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (A.M.M.A.).

Ranjith; Siddique ***PHOTOS: X/@KAMALSANKAR, @AMEERSHAHUL***

Ranjith was under fire after a Bengali female actor accused him of misbehaviour years ago, but the issue came to the limelight in the wake of the Hema Committee report A woman actor had raised assault allegations against Siddique.

Siddique, a senior actor said he has sent his resignation letter to President of A.M.M.A and top star, Mohanlal. In the wake of many women actors narrating their horrific sexual assault experiences in the cinema industry, the Kerala government on Sunday formed a special team to probe the atrocities faced by them. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

'OVER MONEY LAUNDERING'

Telegram messaging app CEO Pavel Durov arrested in France

NICE, 25 AUG

The founder and CEO of the messaging service Telegram was detained at a Paris airport, French media reported Sunday.

Pavel Durov, a dual citizen of France and Russia, was detained at Paris-Le Bourget Airport on Saturday evening after landing in France from Azerbaijan, according to broadcasters LCI and TF1. Investigators from the National Anti-Fraud Office, attached to the French customs department, notified Durov that he was being placed in police custody.

French prosecutors declined to comment on Durov's arrest when contacted by Associated Press, in line with regulations during an ongoing investigation. Durov, 39, was the subject of an arrest warrant on allegations that his platform has been used for money laundering, drug trafficking and other offenses.

The reports said that the warrant was issued by France at the request of the special unit at the country's interior ministry in charge of investigating crimes against minors, including online sexual exploitation, such as possession and distribution of child sexual abuse content and grooming for sexual purposes.

Pavel Durov ***PHOTO: X/@DUROV***

> **The arrest of @Durov is an assault on the basic human rights of speech and association**
>
> -Edward Snowden, the former NSA whistleblower

Durov's representatives couldn't be immediately reached for comment.

The software was found in the wake of the Russian government's crackdown after mass pro-democracy protests that rocked Moscow at the end of 2011 and 2012. In 2018, Russian media watchdog Roskomnadzor moved to block Telegram over its refusal to hand over encryption keys.

Telegram continued to be widely used — including by government institutions — and the ban was dropped two years later. "If the person concerned is to be brought before a judge today, it is only in the context of the possible extension of his police custody measure — a decision that must be taken and notified by an investigating judge," the official said. Russian government officials expressed outrage at Durov's arrest, with some highlighting what they said was the West's double standards on freedom of speech.

"In 2018, a group of 26 NGOs, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and others, condemned the Russian court's decision to block Telegram," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said. —*AP*

Picture of Darshan relaxing in jail goes viral; stirs debate

In the picture, the actor was seen smoking, holding a coffee cup

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

A purported photograph of Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is currently in judicial custody in the Renukaswamy murder case, hanging out with three others has gone viral.

In the picture, Darshan, currently lodged in Parappana Agrahara Central jail, is seen in a relaxed mood, sitting on a chair, holding a cigarette and a coffee cup, in an open space.

According to some reports, those seated with Darshan are rowdy sheeter Wilson Garden Naga, and other inmates Nagaraj (the actor's manager and co-accused) and Kulla Seena.

There has been no official confirmation so far on whether the photo was taken within the jail premises or elsewhere in the past or whether it is a doctored image.

Meanwhile, reacting to the picture, the deceased Renukaswamy's father Kashinath S Shivanagowdru demanded a probe into it and punishment for those behind it. "With such things there is a feeling that a CBI probe should happen."

There has been no official confirmation so far on whether the photo was taken within the jail premises or elsewhere **PHOTO: SCRENGRAB**

Stating that the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and police officials had promised him justice, he said, "The guilty should be punished and thereby my son's soul should get peace. I know the pain of losing my son...we are deeply pained, and he (Darshan) seems to be enjoying being there, in jail... We still have faith in the police and the government."

A total of 17 people, including Darshan along with his friend Pavithra Gowda, are currently in judicial custody in connection with the murder of Renukaswamy.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda had recently said the final report will be submitted to the court by the police in the murder case, at the earliest, after getting the remaining forensic reports.

According to police sources, 33-year-old Renukaswamy, a fan of the actor, had sent obscene messages to Gowda, which enraged Darshan, allegedly leading to the fan's murder. His body was found near a stormwater drain next to an apartment in Sumanahalli here on 9 June.

Renukaswamy, died due to shock and haemorrhage as a result of multiple blunt injuries.

Police sources said Gowda, who is accused number one, was the "major cause" for Renukaswamy's murder, claiming that it has been proved from the probe that she instigated the other accused, conspired with them, and took part in the crime herself. PTI .

—PTI

'ARE THEY ENTREPRENEURS'

BJP MP questions allotment of land to Kharge family-run trust

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Lahar Singh Siroya on Sunday questioned the alleged allocation of Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) land to a trust run by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge's family, and asked when did they become aerospace entrepreneurs to be eligible for the land.

He also sought to know whether the case was about misuse of power, nepotism, and conflict of interest?

"It has come to light from a news report backed by documents that a trust (Siddhartha Vihara Trust) run by Mallikaijun Kharge's family, has been allocated 05 acres of Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) land (out of the total 45.94 acres) meant for civic amenities, under the SC quota, in the Hitech Defence Aerospace Park near Bengaluru," Siroya said in a statement.

The MP noted that, interestingly, trustees of the trust include Kharge himself, his wife Radhabai Kharge, his son-in-law and Gulbarga MP Radhakrishna Doddamani, son and minister in the Karnataka Government Priyank Kharge, and another son, Rahul Kharge among others.

BJP leader Lahar Singh Siroya questioned whether the case was about misuse of power, nepotism, and conflict of interest **PHOTO: X**

- The MP noted that, interestingly, trustees of the trust include Kharge himself, his wife Radhabai Kharge, his son-in-law and Gulbarga MP Radhakrishna Doddamani, son and minister in the Karnataka Government Priyank Kharge, and another son, Rahul Kharge among others.

"Is this about misuse of power, nepotism, and conflict of interest?" he asked.

Further questioning as to how did Industries Minister, M B Patil, consented to this allocation in March 2024, Siroya asked, "When did the Kharge family become aerospace entrepreneurs to be eligible for KIADB land? The matter of this alleged illegal allocation has also reached the Governor's office through an RTI activist."

"Will the Kharge family eventually have to give up this land like Siddaramaiah (Chief Minister) will have to give up the controversial MUDA sites in Mysuru? Will this allocation be probed?" he sought to know.

—PTI

1,500 senior citizens attend job fair in City

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

Nearly 1,500 senior citizens attend a job fair at St Joseph University, on Sunday, eager to explore employment opportunities post-retirement. The event attracted over 800 experienced professionals from various fields, including public relations, marketing, engineering, IT, teaching, accountancy, management, and administration. During the fair, 652 senior citizens received job offers across sectors such as administration, cashier roles, management positions, security services, marketing advisory, teacher training, data entry, reception, gas agencies, and life insurance, among others. According to Nightingales Medical Trust (NMT), 89 per cent of aspirants who turned up did not have any social security or insurance. *—Salar News*

DKS AT VAISHNODEVI

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and his wife Usha visited Vaishnodevi temple in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday **PHOTO: SALAR**

MUDA: Dalit, backward class seers back CM

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

A delegation from the federation of seers from Dalit and backward class communities on Sunday met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and declared their "unconditional moral support", in the wake of the Governor granting prosecution sanction against him in connection with the MUDA 'scam'.

The Chief Minister's office in a statement said, "Strongly condemning the conspiracies of the Central government and the Raj Bhavan to artificially destabilise the government, the swamijis declared that they will stand unitedly and fight against this conspiracy, in favour of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah."

The delegations of seers that met the Chief Minister included Jagadguru Sri Niranjanananda Puri Swamiji of the Kaginele Kanaka Guru Peetha, Jagadguru Sri Shanthaveera Mahaswamiji of Sri Jagadguru Kunchitiga Mahasamsthana Math -- Hosadurga, Jagadguru Sri Immadi Siddarameshwar Swamiji of Bhovi Gurupeetha -- Chitradurga, Jagadguru Sri Basavamurthy Madara Chennaiah Mahaswami of Madara Chennaiah Gurupeeth -- Chitradurga, among several others, it said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah **PHOTO: PTI**

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on 16 August granted sanction for prosecution of Siddaramaiah in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', giving a major jolt to the nearly 15-month-old Congress government. The Governor accorded sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of activists Pradeep Kumar SP, TJ Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna.

- Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on 16 August granted sanction for prosecution of Siddaramaiah in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', giving a major jolt to the nearly 15-month-old Congress government

The High Court on 19 August directed the special court for people's representatives to defer its proceedings against the CM in the alleged MUDA site allotment 'scam', till the next date of hearing on 29 August.

—PTI

Guv Vijayashankar bans liquor in Shillong Raj Bhavan

MYSURU, 25 AUG

Governor of Meghalaya CH Vijayashankar said that he issued orders to his officials prohibiting non-veg food and alcohol consumption in his official residence Raj Bhavan in Shillong, Meghalaya on Sunday. Presiding over 109th Shivarathri Rajendra Swami Jayanthi celebrations held at Suttur Mutt near foothills of Chamundi Hill in Mysuru, he asked his officials to strictly implement this order during his stay. He expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for sending him to Meghalaya as its Governor. *—Salar News*

AHEAD OF JANMASHTAMI

Children dressed up as Lord Krishna and Radha tke part in a dance ballet to celebrate Krishna Janmashtami organised by ACE Enlight foundation in Bengaluru on Sunday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Man arrested for killing lookalike to claim insurance

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

A businessman and his wife have been accused of orchestrating the murder of a man who resembled him in order to claim life insurance benefits and cover their financial losses in Hassan district.

The police have arrested Muniswamy Gowda, a resident of Hoskote in Bengaluru Rural, along with a truck driver, Devendra Nayaka, for allegedly killing an unidentified man. Authorities are still searching for Gowda's wife, Shilparani.On 13 August, Shilparani identified the deceased man, who was found dead by the roadside in Gollarahalli, as her husband. She even performed funeral rites for him.

Gowda had multiple life insurance policies, with his wife as the beneficiary. According to Mohammad Sujeetha, Superintendent of Police, Hassan, the couple hatched a plan to fake Gowda's death and collect the insurance money to resolve their financial difficulties. After the funeral rituals, Shilparani initiated the insurance claim process.

—Agencies

Mandya Congress MLA Ravi Kumar Ganiga **PHOTO:@BZZAMEERAHMEDK**

BJP tried Op Kamala to destabilise govt: Cong MLA

MYSURU, 25 AUG

Mandya Congress MLA Ravi Kumar Ganiga has alleged that leaders from BJP and JD(S) are attempting to destabilise the State government.

Speaking at a press conference in Mandya, he claimed that Rs 100 crores is being offered to each MLA in a bid to topple the Siddaramaiah government. Despite the Congress holding a strong majority with 136 MLAs, Ganiga accused BJP leaders such as BL Santosh, Union Ministers Shobha Karandlaje, Prahlad Joshi, and HD Kumaraswamy of trying to undermine the government.

Ganiga stated that BJP leaders, having promised Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, and other top leaders in their party, are approaching Congress MLAs to defect. Congress party is gathering evidence and documents related to "Operation Lotus" and plans to submit them to investigative agencies for a probe.

Earlier, in October last year too, Gowda had claimed that a team was trying to lure Congress legislators with offers of Rs 50 crore and ministerial positions. He had said that four legislators have been contacted, and there is evidence to support this claim.

Ganiga reaffirmed his party's support for Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, stating there would be no replacement as the Siddaramaiah is strong. He also criticised Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot for allegedly issuing a prosecution order hastily, without verifying the records. According to Ganiga, he further alleged that BJP leaders are also involved in destabilising non-Congress-ruled states like Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala, and Delhi.

—Salar News

National Education Foundation to host 4th edition of STEM

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

The National Education Foundation will host the 4th edition of the "We Care We Share" initiative, organised by Brillio as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts. This STEM competition will be held across government and government-aided schools, with the grand finale taking place on 27 August at National Hill View Public School in Banashankari. The event will feature 60 of India's brightest young minds, selected from over 2,000 participants, making it the largest edition to date. Trustee Secretary of the National Education Foundation, Aisshwarya DKS Hegde, highlighted significance in promoting educational equity.*—Salar News*

No irregularity in clearing sale of 3K acres to JSW: Govt

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

Large and Medium Industries Minister MB Patil on Sunday asserted that there is no irregularity in the State government's decision to execute the sale deed of 3,666 acres of land in Ballari district to Jindal Steel.

Cabinet on Thursday gave its approval for executing an absolute sale deed for 2,000.58 acres of land at Kurekuppa and Toranagallu villages in Sandur taluk, and 1,666.73 acres of land at Toranagallu, Musinayakanahalli and Yerabanahalli, in favour of JSW Steel.

JSW Steel will get 2,000.58 acres at Rs 1.22 lakh per acre and 1,666.73 acres at Rs 1.50 lakh per acre.

Patil dismissed Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Aravind Bellad's accusation of an "internal agreement", in the matter as baseless. Noting that Jindal Steel had approached the High Court because the order issued by the Yediyurappa government was not implemented, the Minister said, the court subsequently directed that the order be followed, and accordingly, the current government has taken the decision.

"Our government has not extended any concessions to Jindal Steel, unlike BJP, which granted concessions to Chanakya University," he said, adding that the land price for Jindal Steel was determined based on the market value. Jindal Steel has invested Rs 90,000 crore in the state, creating 50,000 jobs, he further said. *—PTI*

ACCUSED OF CRUELTY

HC relief for man who denied wife French fries

BENGALURU, 25 AUG

High Court has stayed the investigation into a case against a man for allegedly preventing his wife from eating French fries, after the delivery of their child in the US.

Justice M Nagaprasanna found the allegations against the man to be trivial and therefore stayed the probe.

"Allowing any investigation against the husband would become an abuse of the process of law and putting a premium on the allegations of the wife that she was not given to eat French fries at the relevant point of time. Therefore, there shall be an interim order of stay on all investigation qua the husband," he said.

Court found the allegations against the man to be trivial **PHOTO: PTI**

The woman's husband, who is employed in the United States, was also granted permission to return to his job after he assured the court that he would cooperate with the investigating authorities and not evade the process.

The man's petition sought to stay the investigation, arguing that the complaint was frivolous.

His lawyer pointed out that a Look Out Circular (LOC) had been issued against him, preventing him from returning to work in the US, following his wife's complaint.

The court had previously stayed the investigation against the man's parents, who were also named in the complaint.

In her complaint, the wife alleged that her husband had not allowed her to eat French fries, rice, and meat shortly after the birth of their child. The husband countered it by claiming that during their stay in the US before the child's birth, his wife made him perform all the household chores.

Justice Nagaprasanna criticised the use of the LOC in this case, describing it as an abuse of the legal system. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Sisodia prays for Kejri's release at Golden Temple

AMRITSAR, 25 AUG

Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Sunday paid obeisance at the Golden Temple and also prayed for party chief Arvind Kejriwal's release from jail. Sisodia, a former Delhi deputy chief minister, was recently granted bail by the Supreme Court in the excise policy case. He was accompanied by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. Kejriwal is lodged in Tihar jail in connection with a corruption case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. Sisodia also recalled his 17-month tenure in Tihar jail and claimed that he was put behind bars "under a conspiracy." . Sisodia said he got justice with the blessings of God and because of the Supreme Court and the country's Constitution. Several AAP leaders, including ministers Laljit Singh Bhullar, Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal and Harbhajan Singh, and MLA Jeevan Jyot Kaur accompanied Sisodia. *—PTI*

Co-op society formed in every panchayat: Shah

RAIPUR, 25 AUG

A cooperative society is being formed in every panchayat in the country to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of 'sahkar se samriddhi' (prosperity through cooperatives), Union Minister Amit Shah said here on Sunday. Chairing a meeting in Nava Raipur on the expansion of the cooperative sector in Chhattisgarh, Shah, who holds the home and cooperation portfolios in the Modi cabinet, also said the state government must set up multi-feed ethanol production plants in its three cooperative sugar mills within the next six months. "A cooperative society is being formed in every panchayat of the country. "On the same lines, multi-feed ethanol production plants should be set up in the remaining three cooperative sugar mills within six months so that ethanol can be produced from maize and sugarcane," he said while assuring the Centre's full assistance. *—PTI*

₹50K pension announced for ex-MLAs in Sikkim

GANGTOK, 25 AUG

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang announced that former MLAs would now receive a minimum monthly pension of Rs 50,000. Tamang made the announcement at the 22nd Foundation Day of Former Legislators Federation of Sikkim (FLFS) on Saturday. The Chief Minister said former legislators who had served a single term as MLA will now receive a monthly pension of Rs 50,000. At present, they are getting Rs 22,000 as monthly pension. *—PTI*

J'khand BJP chief among 12K booked for BJYM violence

RANCHI, 25 AUG

An FIR was registered against more than 12,000 people, including 51 identified individuals, for allegedly being involved in a clash with police personnel during a Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) rally in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi, officials said. Some prominent BJP leaders, including the party's Jharkhand unit president Babulal Marandi, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Amar Kumar Bauri, Union minister Sanjay Seth and former Central minister Arjun Munda, were named in the FIR, they said. Meanwhile, BJP workers on Saturday staged demonstrations at all district headquarters and police stations against the police action on BJYM workers during the rally on Friday. The police used tear gas shells and water cannons and fired rubber bullets to disperse the BJYM workers. *—PTI*

PM: Youths without political background must in politics

PM says that they are required to attain 'Viksit Bharat' goal

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said collective efforts will help the youth sans a political background to rise in politics and asserted that the spirit shown by such people during the freedom struggle is required again to attain the goal of 'Viksit Bharat'.

In his monthly Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast, Modi said his Independence Day call for one lakh youth without any political background to join politics has evoked wide reactions with some youth stating that dynastic politics crushes new talent.

"This year from Red Fort, I have urged one lakh youth who are not from a political background to connect with the political system. This point of mine has garnered tremendous response.We thus come to know that a large number of our youth are eagerly ready to enter politics," Modi said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during 'Lakhpati Didi Sammelan', in Jalgaon, on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

All they are looking for is the right opportunity and apt guidance, he added.

"I have also received letters from youth across the country on this subject. Enormous response is being received on social media as well. People have sent me many kinds of suggestions. Some youth have written in their letters that it is truly inconceivable for them. On account of the absence of a political legacy on part of their grandfather or parents they could not enter politics despite wanting to," the prime minister said.

Some youth have written that they possess a good experience of working at the ground level and hence they can be helpful in solving people's problems, he said.

Modi also noted that the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' and 'Poora Desh Tiranga' campaign was a resounding success.

This campaign wove the entire country into a thread of togetherness and this is exactly what 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' is, he said. *—PTI*

BJP attacks U-turn jibe, asks why Cong didn't fulfil OPS

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Ravi Shankar Prasad PHOTO: PTI

BJP on Sunday hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the decision to bring a unified pension scheme for central government employees and hit out at the Congress, asking why it has not implemented its promise of bringing back the old pension scheme in Himachal Pradesh and other states where it is in power.

Addressing a press conference at BJP headquarters here, senior party leader Ravi Shankar Prasad slammed Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for his U-turn jibe at the Centre and said Prime Minister Modi is "sensitive" to public issues and takes decisions in public interest after careful consideration. The Modi government does not take "ad-hoc decisions", the former Union minister said and asked Kharge to tell the nation why his party has taken a "U-turn" on its poll promise of implementing the old pension scheme in Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana.

The BJP leader accused Gandhi of "bluffing" people by making false promises for votes and asked him to desist from such practice. Taking a dig at the government, Congress president Kharge said in a post on X, "The 'U' in UPS stands for Modi Govt's U turns! Post 4 June, the power of the people has prevailed over the arrogance of power of the Prime Minister." *—PTI*

BJP-DMK enacting 'drama' of rivalry, says AIADMK chief

SALEM, 25 AUG

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) general secretary and Tamil Nadu Leader of Opposition, Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday alleged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in the State were "enacting a drama" vis-a-vis their rivalry, but were maintaining discreet ties.

Keeping up the heat over the ruling DMK over the Karunanidhi centenary commemorative coin release event, he questioned Chief Minister MK Stalin's contention that it was a Central government event and reiterated

Edappadi K Palaniswami PHOTO: PTI

- DMK was trying to save its "corrupt government" in the State by ensuring the Centre's support

that the State government conducted the programme.

While the DMK is part of the INDIA bloc, neither Congress' Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul Gandhi nor other party leaders were invited for the event, Palaniswami said and alleged that the DMK was trying to save its "corrupt government" in the State by ensuring the Centre's support.

"To hide all these and to ensure Centre's support, a union minister (Rajnath) was invited and made to release the coin. If we say this, DMK gets angry, BJP leaders also get angry. The DMK is part of the INDIA bloc. Ignoring that, what is the reason to include NDA, that is what people are asking. And I only highlighted this," the former chief minister said. *—PTI*

Chirag re-elected as Lok Janshakti Party chief

RANCHI, 25 AUG

Chirag Paswan PHOTO: PTI

Union minister Chirag Paswan was on Sunday re-elected as Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president for five years at its national executive meeting here.

The decision was taken unanimously at the meeting, Paswan said.

"The national executive, in its meeting here, has re-elected me for the next five years," he said.

Paswan, the Minister of Food Processing Industries, said the upcoming assembly elections in Haryana, Jammu Kashmir and Jharkhand were also discussed in the meeting.

In Jharkhand, the party may contest the polls either with national alliance partner BJP or on its own, he said.

"We have taken suggestions from the state units whether they want to contest the elections in alliance or alone in states where our organisation is strong... At the national level, we have an alliance with the BJP and we are a strong coalition partner of the NDA.

He also pitched for a nationwide caste census, but cautioned against making the figures public as it will create a "rift" in society. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

MAYAWATI RULES OUT ALLIANCES WITH CONG, SP

LUCKNOW, 25 AUG

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Sunday took a dig at Congress' "Samvidhan Samman Sammelan" and urged people to be cautious of the "double standards" of the grand old party and its ally Samajwadi Party.

She also made it clear that her party would not form any alliance with the likes of Samajwadi Party and Congress in any election.

In a series of posts on X, Mayawati blasted Congress for "not honouring" BR Ambedkar with the Bharat Ratna.

She also lashed out at Congress for not declaring a single day of national mourning following the death of Kanshi Ram who, according to Mayawati, gave impetus to Ambedkar's movement.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister also attacked the Congress over its demand for a caste survey, asking why it did not undertake the exercise during its tenures in government.

Mayawati also attacked the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the BJP over the "ongoing conspiracy to make reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) ineffective and abolish it through classification and creamy layer". *—PTI*

FOR PALESTINIANS

Members from different parties, including Congress, Samajwadi Party, AAP and JD(U), meet in support of Palestinians, on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

BJP attacks RaGa's 'Miss India' remarks, says not to demean OBCs

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

BJP on Sunday flayed Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his "no Dalit, Adivasi or OBC in Miss India list" remarks and asked him not to demean the discussion on the empowerment of marginalised sections.

The ruling party's reaction came a day after Gandhi, while pressing for a nationwide caste census at an event in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, said he checked the list of former Miss India pageant winners but found no Dalit, tribal, or OBC among them.

"Rahul Gandhi, you are the Leader of Opposition. You talk about the OBCs.

PHOTO: PTI

It's good. It's your right. But how far lower will you take this debate?" senior BJP leader Ravi Shakar Prasad said, adding it was a serious issue and the sanctity of discussion should be maintained.

"Mr Rahul Gandhi, I don't question your right to raise any issue. But if you are talking of empowering the OBCs, don't you think you need to maintain some sanctity in the debate," Prasad said at a press conference at the BJP headquarters when asked about the Congress leader's remarks.

Prasad asked Gandhi to take note that there have been several eligible contestants from the minority community who made it to the Miss World Like Reita Faria and Diana Hayden. "Rahul Gandhi, do not demean this dialogue," he said. *—PTI*

Rajnath visits top US naval centre to boost ties

WASHINGTON, 25 AUG

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has visited one of the world's largest and most technically advanced water tunnel facilities for testing submarines and other naval weapons in the US, amidst a proposal for the establishment of a similar facility for indigenous design and development in India.

Singh is in the US on a four-day official visit to further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the US and India.

Singh, as a part of his ongoing tour to the US, visited the William B Morgan Large Cavitation Channel (LCC) in

PHOTO: PTI

the Naval Surface Warfare Centre (NSWC) in Memphis, Tennessee.

The LCC is part of the Naval Surface Warfare Center Carderock Division, one of the Navy's preeminent research and development facilities that specialises in critical ship and submarine design. *—PTI*

AAP announces candidates in J&K seats

Jammu and Kashmir is going to the polls in three phases on 18 and 25 September and 1 October PHOTO: PTI

SRINAGAR, 25 AUG

Aam Aadmi Party on Sunday announced making a political debut in Jammu and Kashmir as the party released a list of 7 candidates for the assembly elections, scheduled to be held next month.

The party has announced a list of seven candidates- Fayaz Ahmad Sofi from Pulwama constituency, Mudassir Hassan from Rajpora, Sheikh Fida Hussain from Devsar, Mohsin Shafkar Mir from Dooru, Mehraj Din Malik from Doda, Yasir Shafi Matto from Doda West and Mudassir Azmat Mir from Banihal for the J&K elections

AAP also released the list of of 40 star campaigners for the Jammu & Kashmir assembly elections, which included Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Sunita Kejriwal, Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann, Manish Sisodia and AAP Ministers Atishi, Sanjay Singh, Gopal Rai and MP Raghav Chadha.

Jammu and Kashmir is going to the polls in three phases on 18 and 25 September and 1 October. *—ANI*

TO AVOID BIORHYTM ISSUES

India mulls cheetahs from Somalia, Tanzania

HYDERABAD, 25 AUG

India considered sourcing new cheetahs from Somalia, Tanzania, Sudan and other range countries closer to the equator or in the Northern Hemisphere to avoid biorhythm complications observed in big cats brought from Southern Hemisphere countries like South Africa and Namibia, according to official records.

Due to the differences in circadian rhythms between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, some cheetahs developed thick winter coats during the Indian summer

Cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa have once again developed thick winter coats PHOTO: PTI

and monsoon last year, anticipating the African winter (June to September). Three of these cheetahs -- a Namibian female and two South African males -- died after wounds beneath their winter coats, on their backs and necks, became infested with maggots and led to blood infections.

PTI has learnt from sources that the cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa have once again developed thick winter coats.

Despite these concerns, discussions are ongoing with Southern Hemisphere countries to bring new cheetahs. *—PTI*

Owaisi says Waqf bill aims to destroy Board

HYDERABAD, 25 AUG

AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday attacked the BJP-led NDA government on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill alleging that the proposed law instead of protecting Waqf properties aims to destroy them.

Addressing a press conference here, the Hyderabad MP wanted Prime Minister Narendra Modi to withdraw the proposed legislation.

"In this bill, instead of protecting Waqf Board and Waqf properties, it is a way of destroying them," Owaisi said, asserting that in this bill there is no provision of protecting Waqf, and accused the BJP of "lying".

In the name of protecting Waqf, Narendra Modi and his government are trying to destroy it, he alleged adding that their intention is to destroy it.

The AIMIM chief also questioned various clauses of the bill, including the move to empower district collectors in deciding on the ownership of a disputed property, and to have non-Muslim members on Waqf boards.

—PTI

CBI searches Kolkata hospital in graft case

Prohibitory orders extended till 31 Aug

Security personnel at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata as CBI conducts searches in connection with financial irregularities on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, 25 AUG

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) sleuths on Sunday conducted searches on the premises of former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh, ex-MSVP Sanjay Vashisth and 13 others in and around Kolkata in connection with their probe into alleged financial irregularities at the institute, officials said.

They also searched the residences and offices of those engaged in supplying materials for the management and care of patients. At least seven officers of the central probe agency have been questioning Ghosh at his Beliaghata residence since 8am, while others were grilling Vashisth, the former medical superintendent and vice principal of the hospital, and another professor of the forensic-medicine department of the medical establishment, among others, they said.

- At least seven officers of the central probe agency have been questioning Ghosh at his Beliaghata residence since 8am

Prohibitory orders near hospital extended till 31 Aug

Police have extended prohibitory orders near state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital for one more week till 31 August.

The orders, which were first imposed on 18 August, restrict meetings and gatherings of more than five people in the designated area. *—PTI*

No society is perfect. Crimes against women are a reality. These crimes had come down in Assam in the last three years. But the real intention in the recent incidents is much bigger, through crimes such as rape the target is our land, civilisation. - Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam CM

4 held over rape of 15-year-old girl in M'rashtra

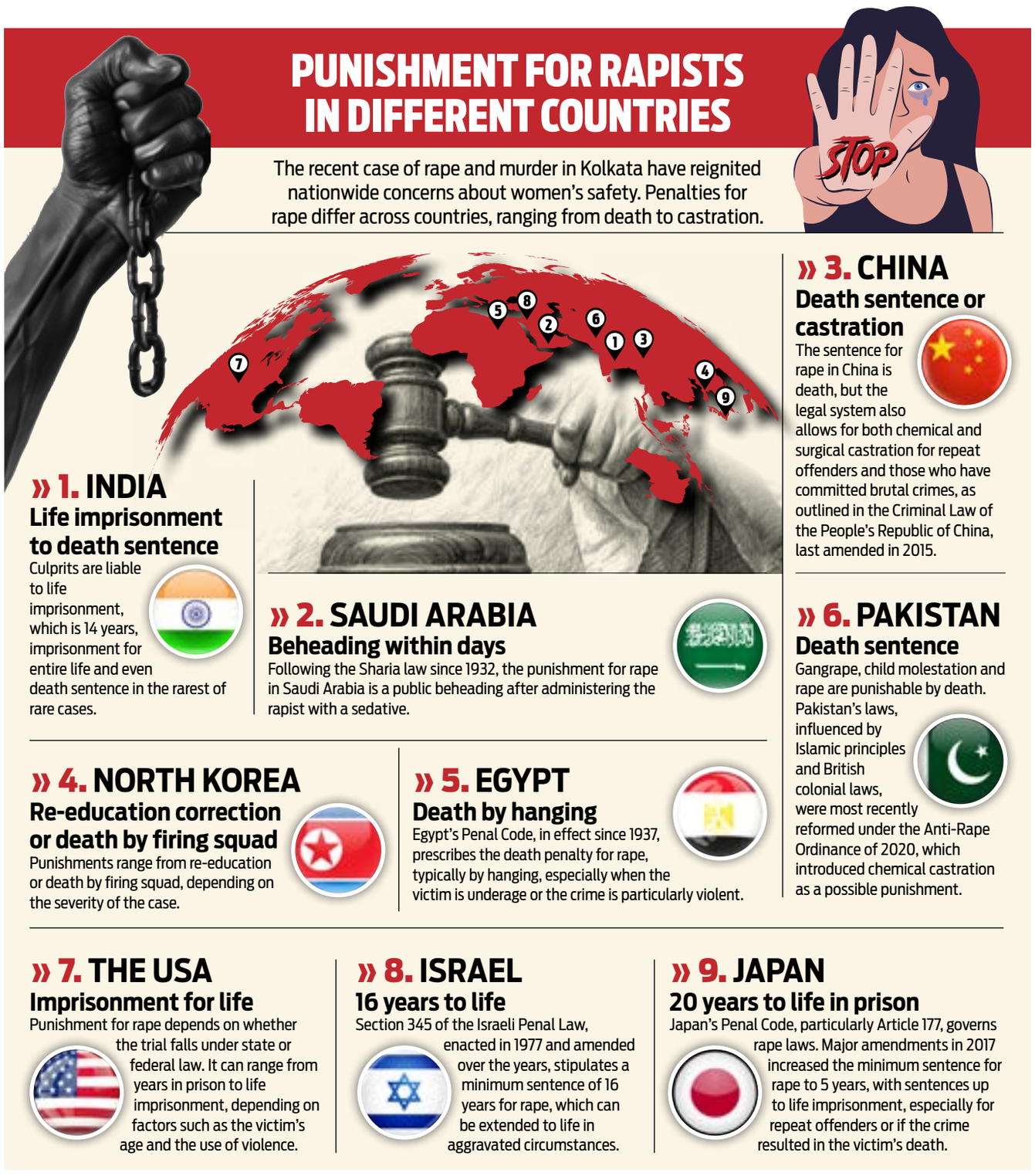
MUMBAI, 25 AUG

Four people were arrested on Sunday over the alleged gang rape of a 15-year-old girl in Maharashtra's Dharashiv. The main accused in the case is still at large, an official said. According to the official, the incident took place on Saturday afternoon when the teenager was going to a grocery shop. *—PTI*

Man held for raping minor girl in Maharashtra

PALGHAR, 25 AUG

Police on Sunday arrested a 42-year-old man for allegedly raping a 12-year-old girl in his neighbourhood in Maharashtra's Palghar district. Accused Rama Ganpat Bhoir, entered the girl's home when she was alone and raped her. He fled from the spot after she raised an alarm. *—PTI*


PUNISHMENT FOR RAPISTS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES
The recent case of rape and murder in Kolkata have reignited nationwide concerns about women's safety. Penalties for rape differ across countries, ranging from death to castration.
STOP
» 1. INDIA
Life imprisonment to death sentence
Culprits are liable to life imprisonment, which is 14 years, imprisonment for entire life and even death sentence in the rarest of rare cases.
» 2. SAUDI ARABIA
Beheading within days
Following the Sharia law since 1932, the punishment for rape in Saudi Arabia is a public beheading after administering the rapist with a sedative.
» 3. CHINA
Death sentence or castration
The sentence for rape in China is death, but the legal system also allows for both chemical and surgical castration for repeat offenders and those who have committed brutal crimes, as outlined in the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, last amended in 2015.
» 4. NORTH KOREA
Re-education correction or death by firing squad
Punishments range from re-education or death by firing squad, depending on the severity of the case.
» 5. EGYPT
Death by hanging
Egypt's Penal Code, in effect since 1937, prescribes the death penalty for rape, typically by hanging, especially when the victim is underage or the crime is particularly violent.
» 6. PAKISTAN
Death sentence
Gangrape, child molestation and rape are punishable by death. Pakistan's laws, influenced by Islamic principles and British colonial laws, were most recently reformed under the Anti-Rape Ordinance of 2020, which introduced chemical castration as a possible punishment.
» 7. THE USA
Imprisonment for life
Punishment for rape depends on whether the trial falls under state or federal law. It can range from years in prison to life imprisonment, depending on factors such as the victim's age and the use of violence.
» 8. ISRAEL
16 years to life
Section 345 of the Israeli Penal Law, enacted in 1977 and amended over the years, stipulates a minimum sentence of 16 years for rape, which can be extended to life in aggravated circumstances.
» 9. JAPAN
20 years to life in prison
Japan's Penal Code, particularly Article 177, governs rape laws. Major amendments in 2017 increased the minimum sentence for rape to 5 years, with sentences up to life imprisonment, especially for repeat offenders or if the crime resulted in the victim's death.

Badlapur rape protest: Oppn leader detained

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 25 AUG

Maharashtra Legislative Council Leader of Opposition Ambadas Danve was detained on Sunday after he protested outside the airport in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar against the Badlapur incident.

Speaking to media outside the Chikalthana Airport here, Danve said, "Police are using force here. Are we terrorists that force is being used against us?"

The Shiv Sena (UBT) leader asked why the police did not use their authority in the Badlapur incident and took swift action.

"Nobody does anything when the offence is not registered in Badlapur for 12 hours," he said.

When asked why he and his supporters were protesting amid an elaborate security arrangement at the airport ahead of PM's Jalgaon visit, Danve said, "We also care for his security. We respect him as he is the head of our nation. Let the police do their work, we will do ours." *—PTI*

Crimes against women unpardonable sin, says PM

ALGAON, 25 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday termed crimes against women an unpardonable sin, adding the guilty should not be spared.

Modi's strong remarks follow protests against the brutal rape and murder of 31-year-old trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital and the sexual abuse of two four-year-old school girls in Badlapur.

Speaking at the 'Lakhpati Didi Sammelan' in north Maharashtra's Jalgaon, Modi said the safety of women should be a priority.

"The safety of mothers, sisters and daughters is the country's priority. I have raised this issue repeatedly from the Red Fort. Be it any state of the country, I understand the pain and anger of my sisters and daughters," he said.

Modi said that he will tell every political party and state government that crime against women is an unpardonable sin. Whoever is guilty should not be spared, he added.

"Those helping the perpetrators of crimes against women should not be spared. Be it a hospital, school, government or police system, at whatever level negligence occurs, everyone should be held accountable. *—PTI*

2 held in Kerala for death of infant after circumcision

IDUKKI, 25 AUG

Two people from Kanjar near here have been arrested for allegedly causing the death of a newborn child after a circumcision procedure earlier this year. The accused were arrested on 22 August, police said on Sunday. Both were, however, granted bail by a court here on Saturday. According to the police, the infant died in January due to profuse bleeding after a circumcision procedure conducted by the accused. *—PTI*

Police constable exam candidate kills self in UP

BAREILLY, 25 AUG

A 24-year-old man allegedly committed suicide here after he could not perform well in the Police Constable Recruitment Exam, police said on Sunday. Yogesh Kumar from Saidpur Manjha village of Fatehganj East area hanged himself to death late Saturday, Faridpur Police Circle Officer Gaurav Singh said. Kumar's body was recovered from his rented room in Faridpur and no suicide note was found from the spot, Singh said. *—PTI*

Man duped of ₹33.3L by woman he met online

THANE, 25 AUG

A 53-year-old businessman from Navi Mumbai was allegedly cheated of Rs 33.3 lakh by a woman who befriended him on an online dating application, police said on Sunday. The accused failed to return the money, following which the complainant approached the police, the official said, adding that a probe is underway and no arrest has been made. *—PTI*

5 dead as heavy rain batters Rajasthan

JAIPUR, 25 AUG

A 45-year-old woman died and four people were swept away by strong water currents due to heavy rain in Rajasthan's Jalore district on Saturday.

The incident occurred when water from the mountain started flowing on the stairs of Sundha Mata temple in Jaswantpura area of the district, police said.

Five devotees were swept away in the incident including the deceased Lakshmi Devi Ahari. While three people were rescued, search for one missing person is ongoing, they said. Heavy rain was recorded at some places in Udaipur, Dholpur, Banswara, Pratapgarh, Kota, Baran, Ajmer, Bhilwara, Tonk, Jalore, Dausa, Sawai Madhopur and Sirohi districts, during the last 24 hours.

Lakshmi Devi **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

According to the Meteorological department, the highest rainfall in eastern Rajasthan was recorded in Dausa at 144.0 mm and 65 mm in Raniwada (Jalore) of western Rajasthan, till 8.30 am on Sunday. Rain activities is likely to reduce from 27 August, Met department said. *—PTI*

Cong demands special Central aid for Tripura flood

AGARTALA, 25 AUG

The Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee on Sunday demanded a special package by the Centre for restoration of damage caused by the devastating flood in the state.

"Damage caused by the flood is huge... At the all-party meeting yesterday, we put forward some proposals before Chief Minister Manik Saha for rebuilding the state and its people", Congress MLA Sudip Roy Barman said. *—PTI*

India, US aim to work together: Rajnath

WASHINGTON DC, 25 AUG

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited the Naval Surface Warfare Centre at Carderock on Saturday and witnessed the experiments being conducted and the facilities available at the centre.

On X, he shared, "Visited Naval Surface Warfare Centre at Carderock and witnessed the pathbreaking experiments at the facility. India and the US look forward to working together and benefit from each other's experiences."

The Defence Minister, who is on a four-day official visit to US, interacted with the senior leadership of US defence companies here in an industry roundtable organised by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum and outlined the various emerging co-development and co-production opportunities in the defence sector in India. He emphasised that India welcomes US investment and technology collaboration, and is ready with a skilled human resource base, a robust pro-FDI and pro-business ecosystem, and large domestic market. *—PTI*

Amritsar NRI shooting: Victim's ex-wife's dad held

AMRITSAR, 25 AUG

A day after a Non-Resident Indian (NRI) was shot at inside his house here, police on Sunday arrested five people, including the father of the victim's first wife, in connection with the incident.

Efforts are being made to nab the two criminals Sukhwinder alias Sukha and Gurkirat Singh alias Guri, who shot at Sukhchain Singh, who recently returned from the US, and are on the run, they said.

The assailants intercepted Sukhchain Singh when he was leaving his house in Daburji village on the outskirts of the city here for a morning walk on Saturday. Those arrested are Sarwan Singh, the father of Sukhchain Singh's first wife; Jagjit Singh and Chamkaur Singh of Tarn Taran who helped the assailants before committing the crime; hotel owner Digambar Attri and hotel manager Abhilash Bhaskar who provided accommodation to the assailants without ID proofs, the officer said. *—PTI*

Miscreants seen entering the house **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT

UDF asks Kerala Cultural Affairs Minister to resign

T'PURAM, 25 AUG

The Leader of Opposition in the Kerala Assembly VD Satheesan demanded the resignation of Cultural Affairs Minister Saji Cheriyan accusing him of 'covering up' the Hema Committee report and trying to protect the accused people by rubbishing the statements of victims.

The Congress-led UDF on Sunday welcomed the resignation of eminent filmmaker Ranjith from the state-run Chalachitra Academy and actor Siddique as the general secretary of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (A.M.M.A.) following sexual allegations levelled by two actors against them in separate instances.

However, the Opposition front warned the state government that the ongoing row and related developments would not end with the resignation of the duo.

The recent release of the Hema Committee report, which sheds light into the numerous incidents of sexual abuse in the Malayalam film industry, has prompted several women professionals in the industry to come out and speak up openly about the alleged harassments they suffered from known persons in the industry.

While a Bengali actress levelled misbehavior charges against Ranjith, another actress from the state came up with sexual assault charges against Siddique, following which both of them had to step down from their respective position. "The government tried to protect the academy chairman but failed. The resignation was inevitable in view of serious allegations," Satheesan said.

Satheesan reiterated the demand for constitution of a team of woman IPS officers immediately to probe the findings in the Hema committee report. *—PTI*

2018: The year of #MeToo

Amid the campaign against sexual abuse, Indian women shared their stories of abuse in the film industry

- **Former actress Tanushree Dutta accused Nana Patekar of sexually harassing her in 2008. She said that no action was taken although she brought up the complaint**
- **Casting director Mukesh Chhabra, who was set to make his directorial debut, was suspended from the film over sexual harassment allegations**
- **A freelance journalist was among many actors who levelled allegations of sexual abuse against director Sajid Khan**

19,179 FIND HOMES

Only 1,404 special need kids adopted in 5 yrs

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Of the 18,179 adoptions recorded since 2019, only 1,404 involved children with special needs even as the absolute numbers of adoptions saw an increase over the next five years, according to official data.

In 2019-20, India saw a total of 3,745 adoptions -- 3,351 in-country and 394 international. Of the total number, only 56 boys and 110 girls with special needs were adopted, the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) said in its response to an RTI query filed by PTI. In 2020-21, a total of 3,559 adoptions were recorded including 3,142 in-country and 417 inter-country. Only 110 boys and 133 girls with special needs were adopted in this year. The number of adoptions dropped marginally to 3,405 -- 2,991 in-country and 414 international -- in 2021-22. The total number of adoptions included 136 boys and 206 girls with special needs. In 2022-23, 3,441 adoptions -- 3,010 in-country and 431 inter-country -- were recorded, with 156 boys and 188 girls with special needs finding adoptive families. Number of adoptions in 2023-24 increased significantly to 4,029 -- 3,580 in-country and 449 international.

The number of adoptions in 2023-24 increased significantly to 4,029; 3,580 in-country and 449 international **PHOTO: PTI**

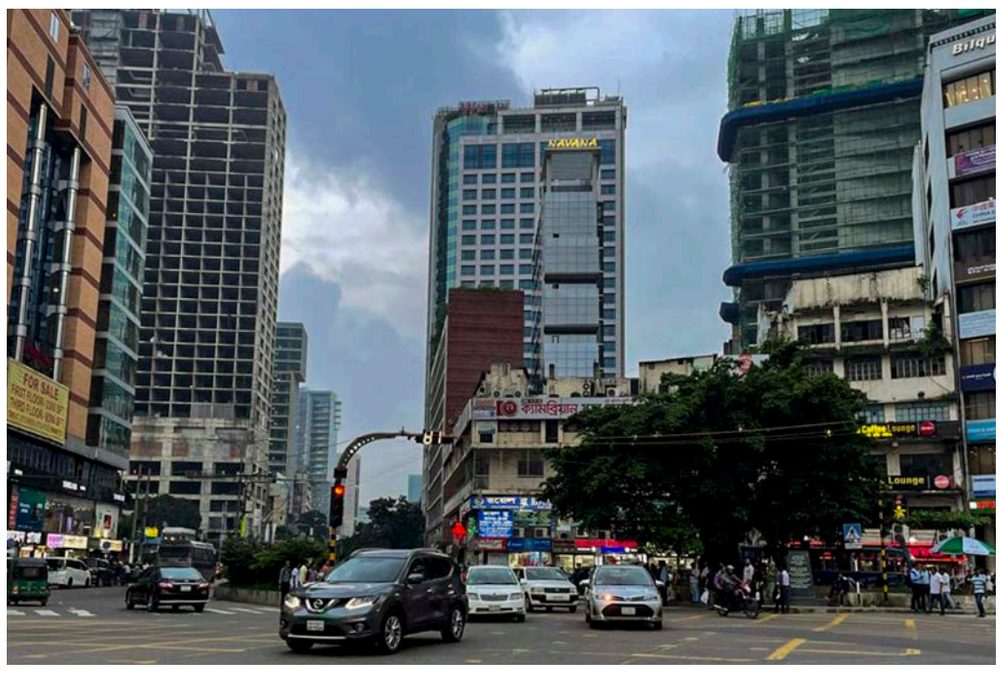
Despite a dip in 2023-24, the overall trend indicates a growing acceptance of children with special needs.

Former CARA CEO Deepak Kumar said, "Even those children who have got a minor correctable disease or ailment, which over a period of time may no longer classify them as special needs, are still labelled as such for the purpose of adoption." *—PTI*

A 30-HOUR PROTEST

Jalgaon farmers stood in the Girna River for over 30 hours, demanding Centre and state governments to take action on the Nar Par Girna water division scheme in the interest of irrigation-deficit region, on Saturday
PHOTO: PTI

Dhaka is back to normal amid echoes of protests



A public square in a commercial area containing luxury hotels and other properties, and other businesses have resumed in Dhaka, Bangladesh
PHOTO: PTI

With the metro resuming services, buses and taxis plying regularly and university students enjoying carefree evening strolls in the gardens of the historic Curzon Hall - life seems to be returning to normal in Dhaka.

Businesses have resumed but it's not business as usual in the capital city of Bangladesh.

Till three weeks ago, the streets of the capital were flooded with anti-government protesters, many public squares choked by the agitating masses reaching a dramatic climax on August 5 -- the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government and her fleeing to India.

The wave of the resistance has subsided and an interim government has been in place since 8 August, but the streaks of rebellion remain in many streets of Dhaka.

In the past few days, several government employees have held protests in groups at the government secretariat while some demonstrators have marched in streets near the famous Ahsan Manzil and other areas to put forth their demands.

Many Dhaka University students are raising their voices regularly at the Raju Memorial Site opposite the Teacher Student Centre (TSC) for holding students' union elections at the varsity and demanding "no political interference" on the campus.

The anti-government protests have initiated a churn in Bangladesh and while education goes on, so do protests to achieve a more equitable society "free of discrimination and corruption".

Ibrahim Mahmud, a student of public administration who took part in a varsity protest earlier this week, alleged that members of Chhatra League, the student wing of the ousted Awami League, used to "harass" several fellow students in the campus.

"We have achieved our 'second independence', this time from the high-handedness of the Awami League and its bad influence," he told PTI on the sidelines of the protest held at the Raju Memorial site opposite TSC.

The Dhaka Metro line near the university—a major lifeline for students and a means to beat city traffic—was shut for over a month.

While the passenger services resumed on Sunday morning, two of its stations Mirpur-10 and Kazipara will remain shut.

These two stations were vandalised during the anti-government protests.

Students of Dhaka University and other institutions heaved a sigh of relief as the metro services resumed after a gap of over 35 days.

Abdur Rahman, a first-year undergraduate student in the English Department of the 103-year-old Dhaka University, said the last time he had used the city metro was about 40-50 days ago. "Life is slowly getting back on track," he said.

Near to the Dhaka Metro station is the historic Curzon Hall housing the science faculty of the university. Students and general visitors go there every evening for strolls while others take selfies or make reels for social media platforms.

Walls of its main lobby still carry the slogans "No quota" and "Only Merit" spray-painted during the agitation.

However, not everything has returned to normal in this historic city of Dhaka—both the political and financial capital of Bangladesh.

On Friday, a holiday in Bangladesh, visitors from Dhaka and other districts of Bangladesh who had come to see the iconic Ahsan Manzil and its museum in Old Dhaka, were "turned away" from the main gate, with security staff telling them it had been "closed indefinitely".

No official reason was cited, though it is learnt that it is a "contingency measure".

The recent protests that rocked Bangladesh for over a month have hit the hospitality sector hard in Dhaka with the majority of rooms at several luxury and economy hotels here going empty in the aftermath of the unrest.

A front office staff at a luxury hotel, running here since 2007 and operated by an international hotel chain, told PTI: "The situation in the hospitality sector is not good due to the impact of the unrest the country has seen recently" and "heavy financial losses have been incurred".

Abdul Moyeen Khan, a top BNP leader and a former Cabinet minister of Bangladesh, who lives in the plush Gulshan area, however, feels the city "largely went back to routine life" soon after August 5.

The rickshaws of Dhaka are one of the defining images of the city. Keychains, fridge magnets and other merchandise at tourism department stores at the Dhaka airport celebrate this ubiquitous three-wheeler.

Even as Bangladesh's wait for the next elections and the next government gets longer, many have decided to go out and explore the world. *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساہ

Chance to save the Great Barrier Reef is fast closing

The Great Barrier Reef will continue to deteriorate, largely to climate change, and the window to secure its future is rapidly closing. That is the sobering conclusion of a major new report into the state of the reef.

The report was released by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. It confirms what scientists have long known: humanity is killing the Great Barrier Reef, and other reefs around the world, by failing to curb the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

Earlier this year, I visited parts of the southern Great Barrier Reef where mass coral bleaching and death had just occurred. The picture was devastating. Vast swathes of coral were bleached a ghostly white. It was interspersed with bright flashes of pink and blue: a final, heartbreaking release of coral pigment as the organism makes a last-ditch effort to survive. I've since learned much of that coral is now dead.

Anyone who knows anything about coral reefs would have been upset by what I saw. The world's largest reef was in very, very bad shape. As I swam, in the back of my head was the knowledge that 2023 was Earth's hottest year on record. In fact, the Great Barrier Reef is the warmest it has been for at least 400 years.

Unless humanity takes dramatic action to halt climate change, we will lose the beautiful, complex reefs that have existed on Earth for millennia. As this latest report shows, even governments and officials now acknowledge this fact.

Make no mistake: the reef is in dire straits

The 2024 Great Barrier Reef Outlook report, released late on Friday, is the fourth in a series of five-yearly reports on the reef's health.

It found warming oceans and severe tropical cyclones are compounding other threats such as crown-of-thorns starfish outbreaks, poor water quality and unsustainable fishing.

The report said the condition of some coral species has improved over the past five years – from "very poor" to "poor". We shouldn't get too excited about this. It means a few fast-growing coral species are bouncing back.

While recent recovery in some ecosystem values demonstrates that the reef is still resilient, its capacity to tolerate and recover is jeopardised by a rapidly changing climate.

As my colleagues and I wrote recently, the Great Barrier Reef has suffered five mass bleaching events in the past nine summers.

Bleaching occurs when corals become so heat-stressed they eject the tiny algae living inside their tissues. These organisms give coral some of its colour and help power its metabolism. In mild bleaching events, corals can recover. But in the severe events that are becoming more common, corals do not survive.

Analysis by others shows the mortality in stark detail. The left-hand image below shows coral at Lizard Island "fluorescing" or releasing bright pigment in March this year. This protective measure aims to limit the damage to microalgae.

The image on the right, three months later, shows more than 97% of the same corals had died.

The report said climate-driven disturbances are compounding the effects of other chronic damage to the reef from: unsustainable fishing, pollution, sediment runoff, outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish.

Among other key findings of the report were that most populations of marine turtles have declined species such as seabirds, sharks, rays, dugongs and seagrasses have recovered in some areas and plateaued or declined in others populations of estuarine crocodiles are recovering many species in declines are listed as threatened or protected.

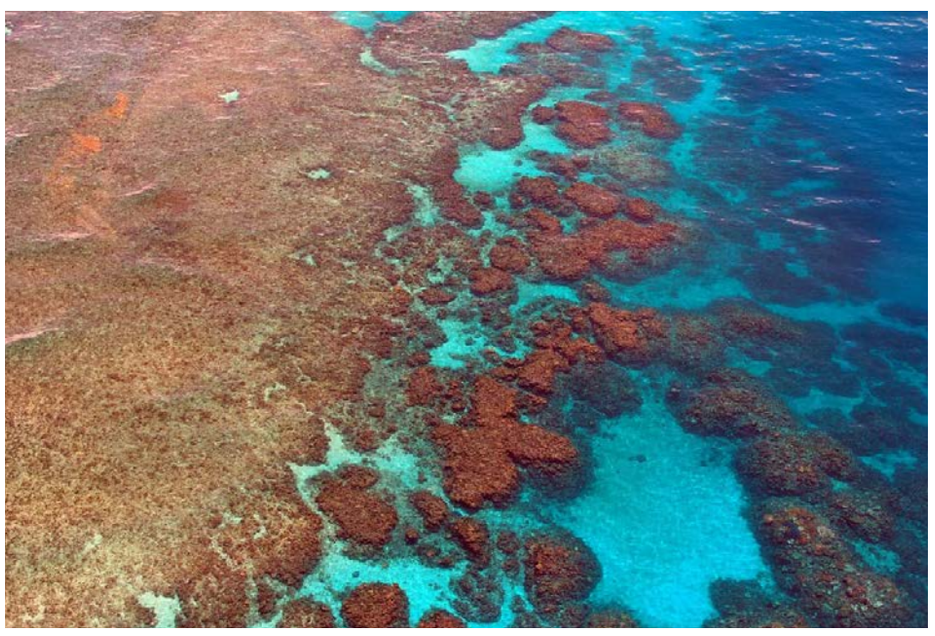
I first visited the Great Barrier Reef in 1980, as a university student. My interest in it has never waned. It's one of those incredible bits of nature that defies description.

The reef's World Heritage listing is proof of its outstanding global value. Australians love and feel pride in this vast and stunning place. The reef supports the livelihoods and wellbeing of many, including Traditional Owners who have cared for it over thousands of generations. It sustains all of us: economically, culturally and spiritually.

You might see a photo of healthy-looking coral and think the reef must be doing well. But I have seen the problem first-hand over many years. The reef is suffering badly – and every fraction of a degree of warming compounds the harm.

Humanity must take urgent action to limit global temperature rise. But we are failing. We are failing the Great Barrier Reef and indeed, coral reefs across the planet. Humanity has all the facts in front of us. Earth is in an unchartered time of very rapid change. If we don't respond, we will lose the Great Barrier Reef.

—The Conversation



The report confirms what scientists have long known: humanity is killing the Great Barrier Reef, by failing to curb the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming
PHOTO: PIXABAY

Boeing in soup as NASA ditches its capsule to bring back astronauts

NASA's announcement on Saturday that it won't use a troubled Boeing capsule to return two stranded astronauts to Earth is a yet another setback for the struggling company, although the financial damage is likely to be less than the reputational harm.

Once a symbol of American engineering and technological prowess, Boeing has seen its reputation battered since two 737 Max airliners crashed in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people. The safety of its products came under renewed scrutiny after a panel blew out of a Max during a flight this January.

And now NASA has decided that it is safer to keep the astronauts in space until February rather than risk using the Boeing Starliner capsule that delivered them to the international space station. The capsule has been plagued by problems with its propulsion system.

NASA administrator Bill Nelson said the decision to send the Boeing capsule back to Earth empty "is a result of a commitment to safety". Boeing had insisted Starliner was safe based on recent tests of thrusters both in space and ground.

The space capsule program represents a tiny fraction of Boeing's revenue, but carrying astronauts is a high-profile job — like Boeing's work building Air Force One presidential jets.

"The whole thing is another black eye" for Boeing, aerospace analyst Richard Aboulafia said. "It's going to sting a little longer, but nothing they haven't dealt with before."

Boeing has lost more than USD 25 billion since 2018 as its aircraft-manufacturing business cratered after those crashes. For a time, the defence and space side of the company provided a partial cushion, posting strong profits and steady revenue through 2021.

Since 2022, however, Boeing's defense and space division has stumbled too, losing USD 6 billion — slightly more than the airplane side of the company in the same period.

The results have been dragged down by several fixed-price contracts for NASA and the Pentagon, including a deal to build new Air Force One presidential jets. Boeing has found itself on the hook as costs for those projects have risen far beyond the company's estimates.

The company recorded a USD 1 billion loss from fixed-price government contracts in the second quarter alone, but the problem is not new.

NASA has decided that it is safer to keep the astronauts in space until February rather than risk using the Boeing Starliner capsule that delivered them to the international space station
PHOTO: @NASA

"We have a couple of fixed-price development programmes we have to just finish and never do them again," then-CEO David Calhoun said last year. "Never do them again."

In 2014, NASA awarded Boeing a USD 4.2 billion fixed-price contract to build a vehicle to carry astronauts to the International Space Station after the retirement of space shuttles, along with a USD 2.6 billion contract to SpaceX.

Boeing, with more than a century of building airplane and decades as a NASA contractor, was seen as the favourite. But Starliner suffered technical setbacks that caused it to cancel some test launches, fall behind schedule and go over budget. SpaceX won the race to ferry astronauts to the ISS, which it accomplished in 2020.

Boeing was finally ready to carry astronauts this year, and Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams launched aboard Starliner in early June for what was intended to be an 8-day stay in space. But thruster failures and helium leaks led NASA to park the vehicle at the space station while engineers debated how to return them to Earth.

The company said in a regulatory filing that the latest hitch with Starliner caused a USD 125 million loss through June 30, which pushed cumulative cost overruns on the program to more than USD 1.5 billion. "Risk remains that we may record additional losses in future periods," Boeing said.

Aboulafia said Starliner's impact on Boeing business and finances will be modest — "not really a needle-mover." Even the USD 4.2 billion, multi-year NASA contract is a relatively small chunk of revenue for Boeing, which reported sales of USD 78 billion last year.

And Aboulafia believes Boeing will enjoy a grace period with customers like the government now that it is under new leadership, reducing the risk it will lose big contracts.

Robert "Kelly" Ortberg replaced Calhoun as CEO this month. Unlike the company's recent chief executives, Ortberg is an outsider who previously led aerospace manufacturer Rockwell Collins, where he developed a reputation for walking among workers on factory floors and building ties to airline and government customers.

"They are transitioning from perhaps the worst executive leadership to some of the best," Aboulafia said. "Given the regime change underway, I think people are going to give them some slack."

Boeing's defense division has recently won some huge contracts. It is lined up to provide Apache helicopters to foreign governments, sell 50 F-15 fighter jets to Israel as the bulk of a USD 20 billion deal, and build prototype surveillance planes for the Air Force under a USD 2.56 billion contract.

"Those are some strong tailwinds, but it's going to take a while before they get (Boeing's defence and space business) back to profitability," Aboulafia said. *—PTI*

Cop among six injured in Sydney spree

SYDNEY, 25 AUG

Horrific details have emerged from the scene of a car crash and stabbing spree in Sydney's south, where a woman and police officer were among those slashed with a blade. Six people were taken to hospital after the incident, including the man suspected of carrying out the wild attacks at Engadine at around 9 am on Sunday morning. Of those injured, two were hurt in the accident and four suffered knife injuries including a bystander who assisted the woman. The woman, 48, allegedly attacked in the car is the partner of the alleged offender, 58, who is known to police. She was allegedly being assaulted by the man as he drove. The man is known to police for a number of matters, and the two people in the car where there was a stabbing were known to eachother and are from southwest Sydney. *—Courtesy, Newsau*

Germany: ISIS claims responsibility for stabbing attack

SOLINGEN, 25 AUG

The Islamic State group on Saturday claimed responsibility for a knife attack in Solingen, Germany that killed three people and wounded eight others, according to its Amaq news site. The group said the attacker targeted Christians and is a "soldier of the Islamic State" who carried out the attack "to avenge Muslims in Palestine and everywhere". Special police units had joined the search for the unknown knifeman who cut the throats of revellers at a crowded festival in the western German city, killing three people and wounding at least eight others, four of them seriously. A 15-year-old boy was arrested early Saturday. Police said he was suspected of knowing about the planned attack and failing to inform authorities, but he was not the attacker. *—AP*

PHOTO: X

Action taken against Philippine vessel, says China

BEIJING, 25 AUG

China's coast guard said Sunday it took action against a Philippine vessel that ignored warnings and caused a light collision with its vessel in the disputed South China Sea, where confrontations between the two sides have increased. Gan Yu, the coast guard spokesperson, said in a statement that the Philippine vessel entered the waters around Sabina Shoal in the Spratly Islands, known in Chinese as Xianbin Reef in the Nansha Islands. Gan said the Philippine ship ignored the Chinese warning and sailed toward the coast guard ship "unprofessionally" and "dangerously," causing the two vessels to brush against each other. *—AP*

Brazil & Colombia want Venezuela to release vote tallies

MEXICO CITY, 25 AUG

The leaders of Brazil and Colombia on Saturday again called on Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro to release voting tallies, days after the country's Supreme Court backed the government's disputed claims that it won elections in July. In a joint statement, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Colombian President Gustavo Petro said the "credibility of the electoral process can only be restored through the transparent publication of disaggregated and verifiable data." The two leaders also warned against repression as the Venezuelan government has jailed thousands and met protests with violence. The governments spoke a day after several other Latin American countries and the US rejected the Venezuelan High Court's certification. *—PTI*

Israeli team returns to Cairo for ceasefire deal

The delegation was set to be led by Mossad chief David Barnea

TEL AVIV, 25 AUG

Senior Israeli negotiators were heading to Cairo Sunday to resume talks aimed wrapping up a hostage release and truce deal in Gaza, despite a large-scale attack by the Hezbollah terror group bolstering concerns of all-out war in the region.

The delegation was set to be led by Mossad chief David Barnea and Shin Bet director Ronen Bar, an Israeli official told The Times of Israel, with the US pressing Israel to smother any bombastic rhetoric and make a public show of support for the talks.

The Israeli team will be in Cairo a day after a delegation from the Hamas terror group traveled there to be updated by Egyptian and Qatari officials, following two weeks of talks between Israeli negotiators and mediators from the US, Egypt and Qatar aimed at bridging remaining gaps in a ceasefire-for-hostages deal.

Talks have largely centered on Israeli demands regarding a military presence along Gaza's border with Egypt, known as the Philadelphi Corridor, to prevent smuggling. Both Egypt and Hamas reject an Israeli presence along the border.

According to the Israeli official, the US is applying significant pressure on Israel to wrap up a deal in order to prevent a larger war from breaking out across the region.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and others at the meeting in Tel Aviv ***PHOTO: DEFENSE MINISTRY***

Israelis got a taste of what that larger war could look like Sunday morning as Hezbollah took aim at the north and center of the country, launching 210 rockets and 20 drones over Israel's northern border, according to the Israel Defense Forces.

The missiles were meant to be part of a larger attack that would have seen rocket fire rain down on the Tel Aviv region early Sunday, but Israel said it took out some 1,000 Hezbollah rocket launchers in a coordinated sortie of 100 Israeli fighter jets early Sunday to thwart much of the planned assault.

The attacks, which Hezbollah said could be followed by more launches later in the week, were claimed as revenge for Israel's killing of Hezbollah military chief Fuad Shukr late last month.

According to the Israeli official, Washington was urging Israel put out messages indicating it is not looking for a major escalation with Hezbollah and is still interested in a hostage deal with Hamas.

—Courtesy, Times of Israel

Israel Defence Minister Gallant calls Biden

In the US, a spokesman for the National Security Council, Sean Savett, said President Joe Biden was "closely monitoring events in Israel and Lebanon." "At his direction, senior US officials have been communicating continuously with their Israeli counterparts," Savett added. The Pentagon said Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with his Israeli counterpart, Yoav Gallant, about Israel's defences against Hezbollah. Austin "reaffirmed the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's defence against any attacks by Iran and its regional partners and proxies," it said. *—AP*

NO DETAILS SHARED

B'desh's former textile and jute minister arrested

DHAKA, 25 AUG

Bangladesh's former textile and jute minister Golam Dastagir Gazi has been arrested here as the police take stern measures against officials and ministers of the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government, according to media reports on Sunday.

The 76-year-old leader was detained late Saturday night from a house in the Piergoli area of the capital Dhaka, The Daily Star quoted Paltan police station officer-in-charge Mollah Mohammad Khalid Hussain as saying.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police detained him and brought him to the Detective Branch (DB) office. Gazi was kept at the DB office as the police station is badly damaged following recent violence, Hussain said, adding that a group of people besieged the house after knowing his location there.

However, the police officer did not provide any details regarding the case for which he was arrested. Earlier, a case of murder was filed against 105 individuals, including Hasina and Gazi, at Rupganj police station in Narayanganj.

Golam Dastagir Gazi ***PHOTO: FB***

Gazi was elected MP from Rupganj-1 constituency in Narayanganj in the 12th parliamentary elections held in January with Awami League's boat symbol.

4 more murder cases filed against Hasina, her aides

At least four more murder cases have been filed against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her former cabinet ministers and aides, media reports said on Sunday.

A murder case was filed on Sunday against 76-year-old Hasina, former director general of Border Guard of Bangladesh Gen Aziz Ahmed and 11 others over the death of Abdur Rahim, an official of the then Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in 2010, state-run BSS news agency reported. The Dhaka Metro resumed services on Sunday. *—PTI*

Volunteers recover the bodies and wounded passengers from a damaged bus near Kahuta in Pakistan on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

40 killed in 2 bus accidents in Pak

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI, 25 AUG

At least 40 people, including 11 pilgrims, were killed and several others injured in two separate bus accidents in Pakistan on Sunday.

The first accident occurred when a bus carrying 70 people veered off the Makran Coastal Highway in Balochistan province. At least 11 people were killed and 35 others injured in the accident. The bus was bringing Shia pilgrims back from Iran to Punjab province.

The Makran Coastal Highway is a 653 km national highway that extends along Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast from Karachi in Sindh province to Gwadar in Balochistan province. Most of the passengers involved in the accident were from Lahore or Gujranwala, according to police sources.

Hours later, 26 people were killed and three others injured when a bus carrying 35 people fell into a ditch in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Qamar Nadeem of Edhi Foundation, which runs the largest private ambulance service, said.

According to the sources, the cause of the accident — which occurred in a mountainous area — is not yet known.

Deputy Commissioner Sadhanoti, Umar Farooq, said that the deceased included children, women, and men, all of whom were from the Sadhanoti district. The police, administration and rescue teams were present at the site of the incident.

The law enforcers said that some of the people have been identified. President Asif Ali Zardari expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the accident, offering his condolences to the families of the deceased. *—PTI*

'We can go deep inside Russia'

KYIV, 25 AUG

Ukraine wants permission from the west to use long-range Storm Shadow missiles to destroy targets deep inside Russia, believing this could force Moscow into negotiating an end to the fighting.

Senior figures in Kyiv have suggested that using the Anglo-French weapons in a "demonstration attack" will show the Kremlin that military sites near the capital itself could be vulnerable to direct strikes.

The thinking, according to a senior government official, is that Russia will consider negotiating only if it believes Ukraine had the ability "to threaten Moscow and St Petersburg". This is a high-risk strategy, however, and does not so far have the support of the US.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy ***PHOTO: AP***

Ukraine has been lobbying for months to be allowed to use Storm Shadow against targets inside Russia, but with little success. Nevertheless, as its army struggles on the eastern front, there is a growing belief that its best hope lies in counter-attack. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said Kyiv had no choice but to retaliate against Russia's full-scale invasion, launched "913 days ago" in February 2022 – and in particular against Moscow's use of aerial bombs. *—The Guardian*

Beijing opposes US sanctions on Chinese firms

BEIJING, 25 AUG

China on Sunday expressed its opposition to the latest US sanctions on Chinese companies over their alleged ties to Russia's war in Ukraine, saying it will adopt necessary measures to safeguard the rights and interests of the country's businesses.

The US on Friday announced sweeping sanctions on hundreds of firms in Russia and across Europe, Asia and the Middle East, accusing them of providing products and services that enable Russia's war effort and aiding its ability to evade sanctions. The US Department of State said it was concerned by "the magnitude of dual-use goods exports" from China to Russia.

The Ministry of Commerce in China in its statement firmly opposed the US putting multiple Chinese companies on its export control list. The move bars such companies from trading with US firms without gaining a nearly unobtainable special license. The ministry said the US action was "unilateral sanctions," saying they would disrupt global trade orders and rules, as well as affect the stability of the global industrial, supply chains. *—AP*

UK PM PREPARES FOR 1ST DOWNING STREET SPEECH

LONDON, 25 AUG

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is preparing for his first Downing Street keynote speech since being elected in July and ahead of Parliament resuming after its summer recess.

According to 'The Sunday Times', some members of the public will be invited to the Rose Garden speech on Tuesday in a signal that the Labour Party leader intends to do things differently from his Conservative Party predecessors. In keeping with a theme the government has already struck amid major announcements since the 4 July general election, Starmer will caution the public that things will get worse before they can get better due to the state of things his government has inherited after 14 years of Tory leadership. The speech will foreshadow the government's Autumn budget statement, which is widely expected to entail tough new financial announcements on 30 October.

The UK PM is expected to say: "When there is rot deep in the heart of a structure, you can't just cover it up. *—PTI*

Myanmar Rohingyas mark anniversary of their exodus

COX'S BAZAR, 25 AUG

Tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar who live in sprawling camps in Bangladesh on Sunday marked the seventh anniversary of their mass exodus, demanding safe return to Myanmar's Rakhine state.

The refugees gathered in an open field at Kutupalong camp in Cox's Bazar district carrying banners and festoons reading "Hope is Home" and "We Rohingya are the citizens of Myanmar," defying the rain on a day that is marked as "Rohingya Genocide Day." On 25 August, 2017, hundreds of thousands of refugees started crossing the border to Bangladesh on foot and by boats amid indiscriminate killings and other violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

Myanmar had launched a brutal crackdown following attacks by an insurgent group on guard posts. The scale, organisation and ferocity of the operation led to accusations from the international community, of ethnic cleansing and genocide. *—AP*

13 dead as flash flood hits Indonesia Island

TERNATE ISLAND, 25 AUG

A flash flood following torrential rains on Indonesia's eastern Ternate Island left 13 people dead on Sunday. Search and rescue teams working with local residents recovered 10 bodies in Rua village in North Maluku province. The team was working to retrieve one more body, according to Bram Madya Temara, an official from the island's search and rescue agency. The flash flood swept away residential areas. *—AP*

At least 10 died from Rua village, Indonesia, on Sunday ***PHOTO: X***

RETURN ON FEB 2025?

Stranded astronauts are ex-Navy pilots

CAPE CANAVERAL, 25 AUG

The two astronauts who will spend extra time at the International Space Station are Navy test pilots who have ridden out long missions before.

Astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams have been holed up at the space station with seven others since the beginning of June, awaiting a verdict on how— and when— they would return to Earth.

NASA decided Saturday they won't be flying back in their troubled Boeing capsule, but will wait for a ride with SpaceX in late February, pushing their mission to more than eight months.

Astronauts Butch Wilmore & Sunita Williams ***PHOTO: X@RAINMAKER1973***

Butch Wilmore

Wilmore, 61, grew up in Mount Juliet, Tennessee, playing football for his high school team and later Tennessee Technological University. He joined the Navy, becoming a test pilot and racking up more than 8,000 hours of flying time and 663 aircraft carrier landings.

He flew combat missions during the first Gulf War in 1991 and was serving as a flight test instructor when NASA chose him as an astronaut in 2000. Married with two daughters, Wilmore serves as an elder at his Houston-area Baptist church.

Sunita Williams

Williams, 58, is the first woman to serve as a test pilot for a new spacecraft. NASA chose her as an astronaut in 1998. Because of her own diverse background, she jumped at the chance to go to Russia to help behind the scenes with the still new International Space Station. In 2006, she flew up aboard shuttle Discovery for her own lengthy mission. She had to stay longer than planned — 6 1/2 months — after her ride home, Atlantis, suffered hail damage at the Florida pad.

She performed seven spacewalks during her two missions and even ran the Boston Marathon on a station treadmill and competed in a triathlon, substituting an exercise machine for the swimming event. *—AP*

UN says Taliban laws in Afg provide 'distressing vision'

ISLAMABAD, 25 AUG

The Taliban's new vice and virtue laws that include a ban on women's voices and bare faces in public provide a "distressing vision" for Afghanistan's future, a top UN official warned Sunday.

Roza Otunbayeva, who heads the UN mission in the country, said the laws extend the " already intolerable restrictions " on the rights of women and girls, with "even the sound of a female voice" outside the home apparently deemed a moral violation. Afghanistan's Taliban rulers last Wednesday issued the country's first set of laws to prevent vice and promote virtue.

They include a requirement for a woman to conceal her face, body and voice outside the home.

The laws empower the Vice and Virtue Ministry to be at the front line of regulating personal conduct and administering punishments like warnings or arrest if its enforcers allege that Afghans have broken the laws.

"After decades of war and in the midst of a terrible humanitarian crisis, the Afghan people deserve much better than being threatened or jailed if they happen to be late for prayers, glance at a member of the opposite sex who is not a family member, or possess a photo of a loved one," Otunbayeva said.

The mission said it was studying the newly ratified law and its implications for Afghans, as well as its potential impact on the UN and other humanitarian assistance.

Taliban officials were not immediately available for comment. *—AP*

PHOTO: PTI

Next round of India-Aus trade pact talks in Nov

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Senior officials of India and Australia are expected to hold their next round of talks for a compressive free trade agreement in November here, the commerce ministry said on Sunday. The two countries implemented an interim trade agreement in December 2022 and are now under negotiations to expand its scope. It said that the tenth round of India-Australia CECA (comprehensive economic cooperation agreement) negotiations was held from 19-22 August in Sydney in the areas of goods, services, digital trade, government procurement, rules of origin and agri-tech. Intense discussions were held on each of these tracks bringing in clarity and understanding for convergence in the remaining provisions, it added. —*PTI*

4 Union ministers to attend India & Singapore meet

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Four union ministers - Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, S Jaishankar and Ashwini Vaishnaw, will attend the India-Singapore ministerial meet on Monday with a view to further strengthen trade and economic ties between the two countries. The commerce and industry ministry on Sunday said the India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) is scheduled to take place in Singapore on 26 August. Goyal will engage with leading global business figures in Singapore, including DBS Bank, Temasek Holdings, OMERS, Keppel Infrastructure, and the Owners Forum. The minister will explore strategies to bolster bilateral trade and investment, capitalising on India's burgeoning market and its dynamic growth trajectory. —*PTI*

Aurobindo's Eugia pulled up for lapses by USFDA

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

The US health regulator has pulled up Aurobindo Pharma's subsidiary Eugia for manufacturing lapses at its Telangana-based plant. In a warning letter to Eugia Pharma Specialities CEO Yugandhar Puvvala, USFDA pointed out that the company failed to ensure the accuracy of data for production and process simulation. "Your firm failed to ensure that laboratory records included complete data derived from all tests necessary to ensure compliance with established specifications and standards," USFDA stated. Besides, the operators also falsified environmental monitoring records,which were not collected in their documented location, it added. —*PTI*

ONGC opens well in KG field to raise oil production

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on Sunday said it has opened another well on its flagship deep-sea project in Krishna Godavari basin in Bay of Bengal, which will help augment production of crude oil and natural gas. In January this year, ONGC had started producing oil, which is converted into fuels like petrol and diesel in refineries, from the KG-DWN-98/2 or KG-D5 block. With this, ONGC also successfully commissioned its gas export line from the offshore-to-onshore terminal. The block, which sits next to Reliance Industries' KG-D6 block in the KG basin, has a number of discoveries that have been clubbed into clusters. Gas output is expected to reach 6 mmscmd by March 2025. ONGC has drilled 26 wells on the field. Out of these, 13 are oil and seven gas producing. —*PTI*

78% CHOOSE E-BANKING OVER CASH TRANSACTIONS

While e-payments are on the rise, use of crypto is also growing

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

78 per cent of consumers now prefer to do most of their banking digitally through mobile apps or websites, according to the Alkami report.

This shift is part of a broader trend towards cashless transactions and contactless payments, which have become the default for many, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the report, nearly 80 per cent of financial institutions have seen an increase in cashless transactions over the past two years. This change has been accelerated by the pandemic, with many consumers opting for digital payments to avoid handling cash. About 60 per cent of these institutions noted that the volume of cashless transactions has surged by more than 20 per cent.

According to the report, nearly 80% of financial institutions have seen an increase in cashless transactions over the past two years PHOTO: PTI

Cashless payments aren't a new concept--personal checks and credit cards have been around for decades. However, today's digital payments, whether made through a smartphone, laptop, or tablet, are quickly becoming the standard.

Interestingly, even though fewer people are visiting bank branches in person, their overall engagement with banks has increased. Thanks to the ease of mobile and online banking, customers are now interacting with their banks more frequently, often on a daily basis.

While cashless transactions are on the rise, the adoption of cryptocurrency is growing more slowly.

Around 21 per cent of financial institutions reported that their customers are asking for Bitcoin products and services.

Although this is still a relatively small percentage, 35 per cent of banks believe that offering cryptocurrency options could give them a competitive edge.

Looking ahead, many experts believe that the future of banking will revolve around personalised experiences. However, only about a quarter of financial institutions are currently using hyperpersonalisation. —*ANI*

FOR 5TH QUARTER

IOC, BPCL, GAIL fined for not meeting norms

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

India's biggest oil firms including Indian Oil, BPCL and gas utility GAIL have been slapped with fines for a record fifth straight quarter for failing to meet listing norms of having the requisite number of independent and women directors on board.

Stock exchanges BSE and NSE have slapped fines on oil refining and fuel marketing giants Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), explorer Oil India Ltd (OIL), gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd, and refiner Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) for not meeting the listing requirement in the April-June quarter.

PHOTO: PTI

BPCL said it has been imposed with a fine of Rs 2,41,900 each by BSE and NSE for having one independent director short.

Stating that it has no control over the appointment of directors, the firm said it will be approaching BSE Ltd and NSE for waiver of the fines.

OIL and MRPL too were slapped with Rs 5,36,900 fines each by BSE and NSE.

—*PTI*

Infosys scouting for more acquisitions, says CEO Salil

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

After two acquisitions this year, India's second-largest IT services company Infosys is on the lookout to scoop-up more firms and says the acquisition matching scale of recent in-tech buy is certainly a possibility.

In an interview to PTI, Infosys CEO Salil Parekh said the company is keen on acquisitions in areas like data analytics, SAAS, and may look at some geographies within Europe, and the US.

Asked if more acquisitions could be of the scale matching in-tech, which came with a price-tag of 450 million euros, Parekh said, "Absolutely, I think those would be the size that we will look at in terms of scale, and given our structure we could do a few of those."

Salil Parekh PHOTO: PTI

Back in January, Infosys announced a definitive agreement to acquire 100 per cent of the equity share capital in InSemi Technology Services, a semiconductor design services company headquartered in India, for a consideration (including earn-outs, and management incentives and retention bonuses) totalling up to Rs 280 crore.

A bigger acquisition followed in three months.

In April, Infosys Germany, a wholly-owned step-down subsidiary, entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 100 per cent of the equity share capital in in-tech Holding -- leading provider of engineering R&D services headquartered in Germany -- for a consideration of up to 450 million euros (about Rs 4,045 crore).

As per the report, domestic deals drove growth with volumes rising 29 per cent and values increasing 2.5 times compared to the first quarter of the current year. In contrast, cross-border deals experienced a decline, with volumes decreasing 24 per cent and values plummeting 85 per cent from the first quarter of 2024. —*PTI*

'IN COMPLIANCE'

Anil Ambani reviewing SEBI order, to take appropriate steps

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Businessman Anil Ambani is reviewing a SEBI order banning him from capital markets for five years and will take appropriate next steps as legally advised, his spokesperson said on Sunday.

Ambani, the spokesperson in a statement said, had resigned from the the board of Reliance Infrastructure Ltd and Reliance Power Ltd pursuant to SEBI's interim order dated 11 February, 2022 in the a matter pertaining Reliance Home Finance Ltd.

He "is in compliance with the said interim order for the last two and half years," the statement said. SEBI had also imposed a fine of Rs 25 crore on Ambani, saying he orchestrated a scheme to "siphon off" funds from Reliance Home Finance, a listed subsidiary of conglomerate Reliance Group of which he is chairman.

On 22 August order that banned him and 24 others from the securities market for five years on charges of diversion of funds, the spokesperson said, " Ambani is reviewing the final order passed by SEBI in the said matter, and will take appropriate next steps as legally advised."

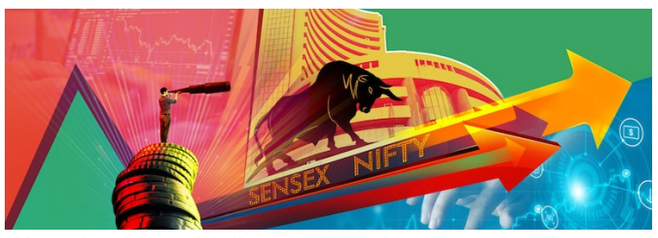
Anil Ambani, Chairman of Reliance Communication PHOTO: PTI

The ban means that he and the other 24 will not be able to access the securities market and are prohibited from buying, selling or otherwise dealing in securities, directly or indirectly.

SEBI had stated that a "fraudulent" scheme "siphoned off" funds from Reliance Home Finance, which provides loans for housing and constructions.

—*PTI*

Macro data, global cues to drive mkt this week



This week, Indian stock indices accumulated 0.7-1.0 per cent gains on a cumulative basis PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

This week, Indian stock indices accumulated 0.7-1.0 per cent gains on a cumulative basis. The indices rose for a seventh straight session on Friday, reportedly their longest rally in 2024.

However, on the last trading session of the week, Friday, the indices treaded with caution ahead of Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's much-awaited Jackson Hole Symposium speech, which had global repercussions. The stock market indices closed largely flat on Friday and slowly closing gaps with their previous highs.

Coming to GDP, India's GDP grew at an impressive 8.2 per cent during the financial year 2023-24, and it continued to remain the fastest-growing major economy. India's economy grew 7.2 per cent in 2022-23 and 8.7 per cent in 2021-22, respectively.

The Reserve Bank of India, in its latest monetary policy meeting, pegged the GDP forecast for 2024-25 at 7.2 per cent. The GDP growth for Q1 is seen at 7.1 per cent; Q2 at 7.2 per cent; Q3 at 7.3 per cent.

Many other global rating agencies and multilateral agencies have also upped their India growth forecast.

In July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised India's growth projections for 2024 from 6.8 per cent earlier to 7 per cent, with the country maintaining the fastest-growing status in emerging markets and developing economies. —*ANI*

Cement makers line up ₹1.25L cr expenditure: Crisil

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Indian cement makers are expected to undertake capital expenditure worth Rs 125,000 crore during financial years 2025-2027, driven by a healthy demand outlook and a quest to attract market share, asserted Crisil Ratings.

As per the rating agency, the projected outlay will be 1.8 times the capital expenditure during the past three financial years.A healthy annualised increase in cement demand in the past three years outpaced growth in capacity addition, pushing industry utilisation level to a decadal high in 2023-24 and prompting manufacturers to press the capex pedal.

Manish Gupta, Senior Director and Deputy Chief Ratings Officer, CRISIL Ratings, said that cement demand outlook remains healthy with a compound annual growth rate of 7 per cent over fiscals 2025-2029.

Over 80 per cent of the projected capex over the three fiscals through 2027 is likely to be funded through operating cash flows, resulting in minimal requirement of additional debt. —*ANI*

Global tech, jobs must be in focus: Ola CEO

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Ola Founder Bhavish Aggarwal is placing bold bets on new-age technologies with a view for India to be at the forefront of the current global tech transition led by AI, and build jobs of the future in the country.

In an interaction with PTI editors at the agency's headquarters here, he said the private sector has to do the bulk of job creation, step up and do more, while creating an enabling environment and correcting imbalances, such as that of trade, are the responsibility of the government.

Aggarwal also supported the government's move to offer fiscal incentives to global EV makers, including Tesla, through the new EV policy saying it is important for India to attract all kinds of investment, and globally established players will help in the development of the EV ecosystem in the country.

Despite India producing 20 per cent of the world's digital data at present, he lamented that the country does not fully own the data, as 80 per cent are stored outside, which are then processed into AI and "brought back into India and sold to us in dollars".

When asked about concerns over AI leading to job losses, he allayed the apprehension saying that the IT boom created jobs in India when people feared that computers would take away jobs, and AI is a similar tool. —*PTI*

SURAKSHA GROUP TO GET ₹3K CR LOAN FACILITY

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Suraksha Group has infused Rs 250 crore in Jaypee Infratech after acquiring it through insolvency process and has also arranged a Rs 3,000 crore loan facility, as it gears up to complete around 20,000 unfinished flats in Delhi NCR.

Around Rs 1,000 crore cash is lying in the balance sheet of the Jaypee Infratech Ltd, which the bankrupt company has accumulated from real estate business and toll income of Yamuna Expressway.

Sources said the Suraksha Group will require Rs 6,500-7,000 crore investment to complete nearly 160 residential towers. —*PTI*

DURING BOOKING

IndiGo to start 'Mx' option for trans people

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

IndiGo will be soon introducing the gender-neutral option of honorific 'Mx' for passengers at the time of booking tickets, as part of larger efforts to boost inclusivity.

Besides, the country's largest carrier, which has a domestic market share of 62 per cent, aims to increase by two-fold the number of individuals with disabilities employed by it.

The airline will be introducing the 'Mx' option at the time of booking for passengers and that will provide a choice for transgenders who do not want to identify themselves, Sukhjit S Pasricha, Group Chief Human Resources Officer at IndiGo, told PTI.

Currently, 'male' and 'female' are the options available on the airline's website during the booking process.

Indigo also aims to increase by two-fold the number of individuals with disabilities employed by it PHOTO: PTI

Air India Express and Vistara already offer the 'Mx' option for passengers at the time of booking tickets.

Pasricha said IndiGo has implemented various initiatives for the LGBTQ+ community, including employee referral programmes specifically designed to encourage hiring of LGBTQ+ individuals.

"This has strengthened candidate mobilisation through internal resources and fostered a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ employees... we partner with agencies specializing in LGBTQ+ recruitment," he said.

"Our benefits like gender reassignment surgery, inclusion of live-in partners in the medical insurance, has created an even more inclusive space, and has been one of the attractive features in our outreach to aspiring candidates from the community," he added. "We prioritise merit-based hiring and have primarily employed individuals with disabilities as customer service officers/executives for airport operations roles, with some also serving in cargo teams," Pasricha said. —*PTI*

9 of top 10 firms add ₹95K cr to mkt valuation

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

The combined market valuation of nine of the top 10 most valued firms jumped by Rs 95,522.81 crore last week, with Reliance Industries, TCS and HUL emerging as the biggest gainers.

Rising for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21 on Friday.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 649.37 points or 0.80 per cent.

The market capitalisation (Mcap) of Reliance Industries surged by Rs 29,634.27 crore to Rs 20,29,710.68 crore.

The valuation of TCS jumped Rs 17,167.83 crore to Rs 16,15,114.27 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever by Rs 15,225.36 crore to Rs 6,61,151.49 crore.

The Mcap of Bharti Airtel rallied by Rs 12,268.39 crore to Rs 8,57,392.26 crore and that of ICICI Bank by Rs 11,524.92 crore to Rs 8,47,640.11 crore.

ITC soared Rs 3,965.14 crore to Rs 6,32,364.24 crore, while State Bank of India added Rs 2,498.89 crore to Rs 7,27,578.99 crore.

In addition, the valuation of Life Insurance Corporation of India jumped by Rs 1,992.37 crore to Rs 6,71,050.63 crore and that of Infosys by Rs 1,245.64 crore to Rs 7,73,269.13 crore.

However, the mcap of HDFC Bank plunged by Rs 4,835.34 crore to Rs 12,38,606.19 crore.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, LIC, Hindustan Unilever and ITC.

—*PTI*

PHOTO: PCB

Fatima Sana to lead Pak in Women's T20I WC

KARACHI, 25 AUG

The Pakistan Cricket Board has named 22-year-old Fatima Sana as their captain, replacing Nida Dar for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup in UAE from 3-20 October. The 37-year-old Nida is going through a lean patch and the team under her suffered T20I and ODI series defeats in England before making a semi-final exit in the Women's Asia Cup last month. The selectors however have retained Nida in the squad that has at least 10 players who appeared in the last edition of the global showpiece. Bowling allrounder Fatima, who has featured in 41 ODIs and 40 T20Is, has previously led Pakistan emerging and domestic sides. She also captained Pakistan to a famous ODI win against New Zealand in a Super Over in Christchurch, in December 2023. —*PTI*

Unofficial women's test: Aus A beat India by 45 runs

GOLD COAST, 25 AUG

Incisive bowling by Tess Flintoff (3/39) and Charli Knott (3/34), who both grabbed three wickets each, helped Australia A defeat India A by 45 runs in the unofficial one-off women's Test here on Sunday. Chasing a target of 289, India A were bundled out for 243 as they managed to add just 94 runs to their overnight score of 149 for 6 on day 4 of the contest. Overnight batters Raghvi Bist (26) and Uma Chetry (47) played cautiously and added 61 valuable runs to the total before the latter was dismissed by Flintoff as the last recognised India A partnership was broken. Chasing a victory target of 289, built around Maddy Darke's unbeaten 105, India A looked to build a foundation but rival spinners -- Charli Knott (3/34), Grace Parsons (2/37) struck in regular intervals. —*PTI*

Suárez scores couple as Miami beat Cincinnati

FLORIDA, 25 AUG

Luis Suárez scored 30 seconds into the match and again in the sixth minute and that was all goalkeeper Drake Callender needed as Inter Miami beat FC Cincinnati 2-0 on Saturday night to become the first team this season to clinch a spot in the playoffs. Inter Miami (17-4-5) avenged a 6-1 drubbing in Cincinnati earlier this season and moved eight points ahead of second-place Cincinnati (15-8-3) in the Eastern Conference and in the Supporters' Shield race. Rookie defender Marcelo Weigandt picked up his first career assist and fellow rookie defender Yaniick Bright notched his second just 30 seconds into the match as Inter Miami grabbed the lead. —*AP*

Star cricketers hail Gabbar's legacy in cricket

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma on Sunday fondly remembered the contributions of Shikhar Dhawan, the significant other of a holy trinity that dominated bowlers with aggression and aura, and said he has left a lasting impression with his accomplishments. Dhawan on Saturday announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. "From sharing rooms to sharing lifetime memories on the field. You always made my job easier from the other end. THE ULTIMATE JATT," India captain Rohit, wrote on 'X'. Kohli hailed Dhawan as one of India's most dependable openers, noting that while his fervour, sportsmanship and signature smile will be missed, his enduring legacy will forever resonate. —*PTI*

B'desh registers historic 10-wicket win against Pak

Pakistan batting order collapse to 146; Rahim man of the match

RAWALPINDI, 25 AUG

Bangladesh shrugged off political unrest back home to notch a historic 10-wicket win after Pakistan collapsed to 146 all out on a dramatic final day of the first test on Sunday.

Off-spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz and left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan, who was a lawmaker in the government of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, shared seven wickets after the pace bowlers mopped up the top order to give Bangladesh its maiden win in 14 test matches against Pakistan.

Openers Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam were unbeaten on 15 and 9, respectively, as Bangladesh reached 30-0 at the stroke of the tea interval for only its seventh away test win and the first since beating New Zealand at Mount Maunganui in January 2022.

Pakistan, which conceded a 117-run first innings lead despite declaring at 448-6, was bowled out by a disciplined pace and spin attack after it resumed on 23-1 and still 94 runs behind.

Mohammad Rizwan followed his career-best unbeaten 171 to top-score with 51 but most of his teammates were guilty of falling to rash shots coupled with some aggressive field placings by Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto.

Earlier, in a dramatic first session Bangladesh set up its victory as Pakistan limped to 108-6 and lost five wickets. Captain Shan Masood (14) was dismissed in the second over of the day when Hasan found a faint edge and had the Pakistan skipper caught behind.

Masood argued with onfield umpire Richard Kettleborough for the second time in the test match after he was also caught behind in a controversial manner in the first innings, but the television replays clearly suggested the left-hander had a tickle on the ball after Bangladesh went for a successful television referral.

First innings century-maker Saud Shakeel needlessly tried to play an extravagant shot against Shakib and got stumped for zero for the first time in his short test career. Abdullah Shafique also ran out of patience and went for an over ambitious shot against Shakib and top edged a catch to point before Mehidy found the outside edge of Salman Ali Agha's bat in his second over.

Bangladesh kept up the pressure on Pakistan after the break as Mehidy picked up three wickets after lunch. Rizwan under edged a sweep against the offspinner back onto his stumps soon after completing his half century and then No. 11 Mohammad Ali was out leg before wicket. —*AP*

Bangladesh's Shadman Islam, and Zakir Hasan shake hand with Pakistani players after winning first test cricket match against Pakistan *PHOTO: PTI*

SCOREBOARD

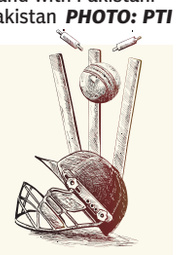
PAKISTAN	BANGLADESH
1st Innings 448/6 DECLARED	1st Innings 565
2nd Innings 146	2nd Innings 30/0

BANGLADESH WIN BY 10 WICKETS

TOP 5 INNINGS

TOTAL	OPPOSITION	YEAR
638	Sri Lanka	2013
595/8 dec*	New Zealand	2017
565	Pakistan	2024
560/6 dec	Zimbabwe	2020
556	West Indies	2012

*Declared



Noni hits hat-trick as Chelsea thrash Wolves

CHELSEA, 25 AUG

After being constantly booed by the home crowd for a disparaging social media post about Wolverhampton, Noni Madueke responded with a second-half hat trick to give Chelsea its first Premier League win under manager Enzo Maresca.

Madueke netted three goals in a 14-minute span — all of them assisted by Cole Palmer — to spark a 6-2 win over Wolves on Sunday that at times had the same kind of chaotic feel that envelops most things at Chelsea these days. But the emphatic second-half performance also indicated that Maresca may already be figuring out how to get the best out of the wealth of attacking talent at his disposal.

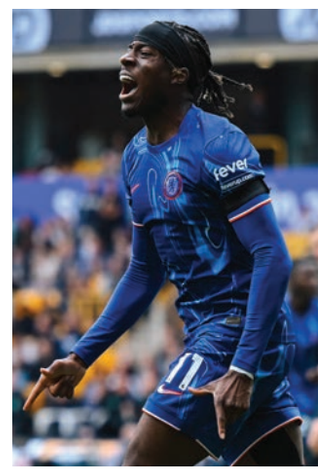
Madueke's hat trick capped a day where he had already drawn headlines for an Instagram post that used an expletive to describe "everything about this place" after Chelsea arrived in Wolverhampton. While he later deleted the post, Wolves fans let him know they didn't appreciate the sentiment and booed him every time they got the chance.

Bayern beat Wolfs 3-2 to start Bundesliga campaign

Bayern Munich's bid to wrest Bundesliga honors back from Bayer Leverkusen started Sunday with a hard-fought 3-2 win at Wolfsburg.

Serge Gnabry scored the winning goal late after Bayern allowed Wolfsburg to come from behind to lead 2-1 early in the second half.

Vincent Kompany made his league debut as coach, and Michael Olise started for his, but it was an old Bayern favorite who made the difference as Thomas Müller went on as a substitute for his club record-setting 474th Bundesliga appearance. The 34-year-old Müller had an immediate effect after going on in the 65th minute, when the unfortunate Jakub Kaminski scored an own goal to draw Bayern level after a corner. —*AP*



Noni Madueke celebrates after scoring goal *PHOTO:@CHELSEAFC*

95 officials to accompany 84 Paris Paralympians

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

The 84-member Indian contingent taking part in the Paris Paralympics beginning on August 28 will be accompanied by 95 officials as many participants will have their personal coaches and escorts travelling with them to take care of their special needs.

The total strength of the Indian contingent will thus have 179 members. Out of the 95, as many as 77 are team officials, nine are contingent medical officials and another nine contingent officials.

India is sending the largest number of participants in the Paris Paralympics (August 28 to September 8) with 84 athletes competing in 12 sports. In the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021, India was represented by 54 members in nine sports.

"Considering the special needs of some para athletes, personal coaches have been included in the contingent. However, they will provide necessary services to other players as per the directions of the Chef de Mission/team head coach," the ministry said while clearing the contingent.

The likes of javelin thrower Sumit Antil and shooter Avani Lekhara, who would be looking to defend their Tokyo Paralympics gold, are among those who will be having personal coaches.

"In any para sports event, the participants need more support staff like personal coaches and escorts than able-bodied competitors. So, it is nothing new to have more support staff in para sports," a team official said. —*PTI*

ZORGANI TARGETS PARALYMPIC GLORY

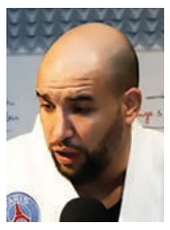
PARIS, 25 AUG

Nacer Zorgani has had a busy summer.

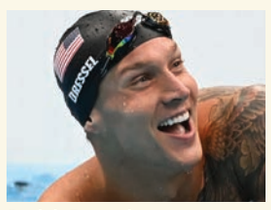
In July at the Paris Games, his captivating baritone voice gained him fans as the announcer at the Olympic boxing. Now, the 38-year-old is preparing to make his mark as a fiercely dedicated Para-judo competitor, training tirelessly for the Paralympic Games that start Wednesday.

Zorgani will compete on Sept. 7 in the men's 90-kilogram, J2 classification for visually impaired athletes For him, the sport is far more than just a competition; it is the embodiment of his lifelong commitment to the "way of the bushi," with the traditional Japanese martial art philosophy of bushido shaping his journey.

Before finding his calling in judo, Zorgani dabbled in various sports, including boxing and Brazilian jiu-jitsu. —*AP*



Boxer Olympic commentator and Paralympics judoka Nacer Zorgani *PHOTO: INSTAGRAM | PSG FOR COMMUNITIES*



Caeleb Dressel *PHOTO: BRITANNICA*

Dressel to end Olympic career in 2028 LA

FLORIDA, 25 AUG

Two weeks removed from the Paris Games, gold medal swimmer Caeleb Dressel is already making plans for Los Angeles. The 28-year-old Dressel said Saturday at Daytona International Speedway that he would like to end his competitive career racing the 50-meter freestyle in 2028. "I'm young. I'm feeling good," he said, also pointing to how his son has changed his perspective. "It's hard right now because when you get done with a championship meet the last thing you want to think about is swimming. But it has always been one of my dreams to compete on American soil at a championship meet. So, yes, my eyes are on 2028. I don't think it's going to be a full-event lineup. I think maybe just the 50 free, put a little bit more muscle on, don't have to be in as good a shape." —*AP*

US OPEN

Djokovic demands change in doping rules after Sinner case

NEW YORK, 25 AUG

Novak Djokovic has called for anti-doping rules in tennis to change in the light of Jannik Sinner's recent case and he says that he understands why players have questioned whether doping cases are treated equally.

Djokovic also gets why some tennis players question whether there's a double-standard in the sport after the Sinner case.

"We see a lack of standardised and clear protocols. I can understand the sentiments of a lot of players that are questioning whether they are treated the same," Djokovic said.

Djokovic said the Professional Tennis Players Association that he co-founded advocates on behalf of players for clear and fair protocols and standardized approaches to cases.

Sinner tested positive twice in March for an anabolic steroid, but the International Tennis Integrity Agency determined the banned performance-enhancer entered his system unintentionally through a massage from his physiotherapist.

"I understand the frustration of the players is there, because of a lack of consistency," Djokovic said. "As I understood, his case was cleared the moment basically it was announced." "Many players ... have had similar or pretty much the same cases, where they haven't had the same outcome," Djokovic said, "and now the question is whether it is a case of the funds — whether a player can afford to pay a significant amount of money for a law firm that would then more efficiently represent his or her case." —*AP*

PHOTO: X@Olympics

Djokovic seeks a record 25th Grand Slam title

NEW YORK, 25 AUG

As big a deal as finally winning an Olympic gold medal was to Novak Djokovic, as much as he has accomplished in tennis — the men's-record 24 Grand Slam trophies, the 99 total titles, the most weeks at No. 1 for any player and on and on — do not for a moment think he is satisfied as the U.S. Open begins.

"People would ask me: Now that you have basically won everything with the golden medal, what else is there to win?' I still feel the drive. I still have the competitive spirit," the 37-year-old from Serbia said Saturday. "I still want to make more history and enjoy myself on the tour." If it seems like there is always some sort of milestone in the offing when Djokovic takes the court, that's because there usually is. —*AP*

STRAIGHT SETS WIN

Shuttler Tanvi Patri clinches Asian U-15 C'ship

Tanvi Patri *PHOTO: BAI*

NEW DELHI, 25 AUG

India's Tanvi Patri clinched the under-15 girls singles title at the Badminton Asia U-17 & U-15 junior championships after she defeated Thi Thu Huyen Nguyen of Vietnam in straight games in the final in Chengdu, China on Sunday.

The 13-year-old Patri, seeded No. 1, wrapped up the proceedings in just 34 minutes as she cruised to a 22-20 21-11 victory over her second-seeded opponent in the summit clash.

With the feat, Parti joins the likes of Samiya Imad Farooqui and Tasnim Mir, who had won the U-15 girls singles crown in 2017 and 2019 respectively.

Such was Patri's domination throughout the tournament that she didn't drop a single game across five matches that she had played.

In the final, Patri was trailing 11-17 but kept her calm as Nguyen made a series of unforced errors. The Indian grabbed the opportunity with both hands to claim the first game. Patri continued the winning momentum, dominating the second game from the start to eventually seal the match and clinch the gold medal.

"The robust and extremely competitive domestic circuit has been playing an important role in preparing our top players for such major international events. I am confident that we will see many more title triumphs from not just Tanvi and Gnana, but other Indian juniors in the coming times."

Gnana had won the bronze medal in the U-17 boys singles event on Saturday. Three other Indian players made it to the quarter-final stage in the competition.

However, aiming to be in the best shape for the upcoming tournaments in the BWF circuit, India's Lakshya Sen on Sunday left for Austria for a detailed evaluation of his body. —*PTI*

SHILLONG TO FACE GUWAHATI IN DURAND CUP FINAL

SHILLONG, 25 AUG

Shillong Lajong FC's fiery attack will be up against NorthEast United FC's resolute defence as both the teams will fight for supremacy in a 'NorthEast Derby' here on Monday for a place in the 133rd Durand Cup summit clash.

The match which was originally scheduled to take place in Kolkata was rescheduled to Shillong, due to the request of the supporters. NorthEast United overcame a valiant Indian Army side in the quarterfinals 2-0 at Kokrajhar, while Shillong Lajong stunned Kolkata giants East Bengal in front of their home fans 2-1 to book their places in the first semi-finals. The stadium has been packed to the brim for all the matches in the tournament and the semi-final is set to be a sellout with supporters from both Shillong and Guwahati. Jose Hevia-coached Shillong Lajong FC topped their group and then dumped out East Bengal in the quarterfinals, playing some tactically brilliant football. —*PTI*

Dortmund fans protest club's deal with arms maker

A fan wears a mask of Rheinmetall CEO Armin Papperger during a protest *PHOTO: DPA*

DORTMUND, 25 AUG

Borussia Dortmund fans protested their club's controversial sponsorship deal with an arms manufacturer during the team's Bundesliga opener on Saturday.

The second half of Dortmund's 2-0 win over Eintracht Frankfurt started against a backdrop of banners criticising Dortmund's three-year sponsorship deal with Düsseldorf-based Rheinmetall – the world's largest maker of artillery ammunition.

"Not for (expletive) armaments industry," read one sign under a giant banner that simply cursed the Rheinmetall deal with an expletive. "Money first, values second," read more banners, while another said, "Our values rolled over by a tank."

"Borussia connects, Rheinmetall kills," said another couple of banners.

The fans were also noticeably quieter than usual when the second half began, withholding their support for several minutes before eventually resuming. More than 81,000 supporters attended the match at Dortmund's Westfalenstadion. —*AP*